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EPISODES OF MY SECOND LIFE.

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E P I S O D E S OF M Y S E C O N D L I F E

BY

ANTONIO GALLENGA
(L. MARIOTTI)

IN TWO VOLUMES

VOL. I.

AMERICAN EXPERIENCES

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PREFACE.

THE 4th of November, 1880, was my seventieth birthday. Up to that date I had never really felt, though I often seriously declared, that I was growing old. But “Threescore years and ten are the days of our age,” and were I even one of the “strong men” who “come to fourscore,” I must be aware that, in what may remain, there must be more to endure than to achieve, and that the Night will soon come when no man can work.

“Threescore and ten!” The day is done; and the shades of evening bring rest, and leisure for self-concentration and self-abasement. We look back upon life through the small end of the spy-glass. Our self-conceit dwindles as our stature shrinks; indeed, we should pity the man whom every year as it passes did not bring nearer to a just estimate of his own worth. Self-knowledge is at the basis of all learning. It is the study of a whole life. And though it only ends with existence itself, still every day’s experience and disenchantment should bring its own lesson. Live and learn should be the rule. And whatever knowledge we attain should be made of some value to our fellow-beings.

“Story?” quoth the Tinker. “Bless you! I have none.” But the old Vagabond lied, we may be sure. There is not one of us Old Men, who has not a tale to tell of himself. The

temptation to "make a clean breast of it," to state how we have disposed of our time, how we invested our talent, is strong within all of us; strongest among the most conscientious of us.

The thing is overdone, no doubt; "Of making many books there is no end." No end of Memoirs, Confessions, Reminiscences, personal gossip of every description. And it is, perhaps, all this vast farrago of retrospective literature that warns us that our World is getting old and given to twaddle. "Should not," it may be asked, "self-revelation be reserved as a privilege of great minds?" I doubt it. "Can the sayings and doings of an obscure individual possess any general interest?" Why not? If we admit that every man's life is a Romance, surely that of the most unknown hero may afford the freest scope for the treatment of an adroit writer of fiction. We cannot make a novel out of a Wellington's or a Carlyle's Biography. Not of Wellington, because Romance would at every step too rudely clash with the stubborn facts of recent history. And not of Carlyle, because the *Ideal* of the Man which we had all made out of his well-known writings would too soon be dispelled by a close acquaintance with the *Real* as we should see it in his Memoirs.

For my own part, I think that the Tinker had the best tale, had the old Rogue been willing to tell, and had any one been able to write it.

Shall I try my hand at it? I have been for many years a Tinker of Books. But what I have written was so soon and so utterly forgotten, dead and buried, that not one line of it will ever rise to bear witness against me. The life of an obscure author is simply a page out of the Book of Man. So long as it is true to the Race, it little matters whether the Type be a Person or a Myth.

The Episodes of my life, which I am here attempting to recall, are so far back in the past, my remembrance of

them is so hopelessly faded and blurred, that the *retentive* faculties must, almost unconsciously, fall back on the resources of the *inventive*; so that it becomes extremely difficult, even for myself, to determine where the *Vrai* ends and the *Vrai-semblable* begins.

On one point alone I am easy in my mind. I can freely assert that not one single line in these two volumes has been written in malice. By far the greatest number of the *Dramatis Personæ* have long since quitted the stage of the world. Of the survivors, some are known to fame, and these are public property. The names of the others one would vainly look for in the Red Books or Directories of the various localities mentioned as their residence. Whatever these worthies may be in real life, here they will only come forth as Phantoms.

Whatever judgment I may have passed upon myself; whether the picture of my character, resulting from the narrative of my thoughts and deeds, be too partial or too severe—I must at least be held guiltless of having indulged in any personality offensive to the Dead or Living.

A. G.

October, 1884.

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EPISODES OF MY SECOND LIFE.

CHAPTER I.

THE PILLARS OF HERCULES.

Twenty years at home—Five years' wanderings—A safe shelter—
Longing for storms—A tempter—A deceiver—A prudent coun-
sellor—A sanguine adviser—A leap in the dark—Away on the
billows.

ON the 15th of August, 1836, I was born again. On that day, hallowed among Catholics as the Feast of the Assumption of the Virgin Mary, and observed in France as La Saint Napoléon, I embarked at Gibraltar for New York. I was then five-and-twenty years old. Up to that date I had been an Italian; henceforth, without laying aside my national identity, I would have to take up as much of the garb and language, of the habits of thought and of the nature and temperament of an alien race, as I might deem desirable or find inevitable. It was the beginning of

a new life. A new mind and a new heart were, with or without my consent, to grow up within me.

A few words will easily dispose of the first quarter of a century of my Italian and European experiences. I was born at Parma. My father was a Piedmontese of a good old country family, a native of Castellamonte, in Canavese, a rural district of the province of Ivrea. As a younger son, he had been by his parents intended for the Church. But he broke from the seminary, crossed over to the French, who were then (1795) storming the defiles of the Alps under Massena, enlisted in their ranks, served for ten years under Napoleon; but on his way through Parma, he married there and settled, exchanging his rank in the army for a not very lucrative office in the Civil Service.

I was the first-born of five surviving children. I was sent to school at the age of five, and graduated at the University at eighteen. Success in various branches of learning; exaggerated praises of fond instructors, and an easily won popularity among my fellow-students, conspired to encourage a fully-developed self-conceit, and led to the pleasing conviction that I was born a genius. A certain audacity in many a school riot insured for me the position of a ringleader, while a deep and earnest sense of the wrongs of my

country opened before me a career which might have won me distinction as a hero or a martyr.

Events seemed to favour these high-flown juvenile aspirations. I was barely in my twentieth year when the great tidings of the French Revolution of 1830 broke upon us. It roused a great stir throughout Italy, and especially in our Emilian provinces of Parma, Modena, Bologna, and Romagna, which were soon in open insurrection. I was for a few months—January to March, April and May, 1831—a conspirator, a State prisoner, a combatant, and a fugitive ; and for the five ensuing years an exile.

In that capacity I travelled for a short time in France, in Provence and Burgundy. I settled for nearly two years in Corsica; ventured back from Switzerland into Italy by contraband, and under the assumed name of Luigi Mariotti smuggled myself with difficulty from State to State, till I embarked at Naples with the friendly family of a Neapolitan consul, with whom I resided for eight months at Malta, and for a whole year in Morocco.

During these five years of wandering I was distracted between moping home-sickness and the delusive hope of some favourable change in my country's destinies. All my thoughts were of Italy. But for

the rest there were neither very serious difficulties nor very dire sufferings in my condition of a banished man. On first landing at Marseilles I made up my mind that I would be no charge to my family, and that what little school learning I had should be, if not the sword wherewith to open the world's oyster, at least the knife with which to cut my bread. In Corsica I obtained employment as a tutor in a good family of Bastia. And it was in the same capacity that a home was offered to me in the house of the Neapolitan consul in Malta and Tangiers. A pleasanter life than mine was in this latter place could not be easily imagined. The Consul was a mere youth of twenty, the eldest of many children all living under control of their widowed mother. I soon became one of them, beloved and looked up to as an elder brother. Not too much of our time was taken up with lessons, but my intercourse with them, in the good mother's estimation, gave them the habit of higher thoughts and feelings, and exercised a moral influence of which those of them who still survive, now grown old, declare that they still experience the beneficial effects. I was with them in all their work and amusements, and welcome as a friend to all their friends.

The Christian residents in Tangiers, as in other

Mohamedan regencies, constituted at that time a sufficiently interesting polyglot community. Each consul-general and diplomatic agent was a little potentate, and all the subjects of the State he represented were his little court. He lived generally on intimate terms with his colleagues of other nationalities, and their visiting at each other's houses, and joining in picnic, garden, and other pleasure parties, and in riding, shooting, and boating excursions, gave rise to a state of society enlivened by all the charms of a pleasing variety and contrast. Chance had brought together about a score of European families with such a bevy of lovely and well-educated English, Swedish, Danish, Austrian, and Piedmontese ladies and young ladies that it would have been impossible for me not to lose my heart to one of them had it not been equally impossible not to share it among them all. Our evenings passed thus at each other's houses with all the enchantment that talk and sentiment, music, dancing, books and prints, cards, and all other contrivances of modern civilisation could contribute to mutual entertainment and genial international converse.

Comfortable and even luxurious as European life in that extreme corner of North Africa undoubtedly was, it was not long before I became aware of its

sameness and emptiness, of its futility, especially with respect to the attainment of those lofty purposes and the achievement of those valiant deeds for which in the depth of my inmost soul I fancied I had been brought into the world, and on which all the yearnings of my unquiet spirit were centred. In spite of the unfailing kindness and deference with which I was treated at home and received abroad, I felt that my situation as a tutor was one of constraint and dependence, and I was full of silly complaints, borrowed from Dante, about “the salt that savours other people’s bread, and the hardship of climbing and descending other people’s stairs.” It was not in my capacity as a man and a gentleman, I said to myself, not in my own name or for my sake, not on a footing of equality that I was asked to dine here, to play whist there, to join this or that party on foot or on horseback; it was merely as an appendage to my master’s household, and upon the implied condition that I should know my place and beware of presumption upon condescension. Nothing, I must hasten to say, could be more unreasonable than my susceptibility in that respect, nothing more unjust or ungenerous; but the feeling was stronger than myself, and it poisoned what would otherwise have been a very sweet existence; it made me shrink back into

myself, shun the company which had for me the strongest attraction ; and in the presence of those fair ones whose smiles were most bewitching, I could only repeat with bitterness : “ If they are not fair for me, what care I how fair they be ? ”

No ! I felt that I was not in my proper sphere, that I was a dependant admitted on mere sufferance, that I wasted my existence out of all hope of ever being the master of my own destinies.

Heaven knows how long, if left to my own devices, I might have wavered between my false pride and the sound judgment, better feelings, pecuniary considerations which made me shrink from a plunge back into those storms of life from which a kind Providence had wafted me into this safe and smooth, however somewhat stagnant, haven. But chance brought to me from Gibraltar the tempter who put an end to my irresolution and took my reason by storm.

This was a youth from my native town, by name Giovanni Baiardi, a younger scion of a noble family claiming descent from the Preux Chevalier, but now, like many other patrician houses in Italy, sunk to the lowest stage of poverty and obscurity. I had often met and spoken to him at the University, but had lately lost sight of him, as he belonged to that class

of idlers whose occupation and means of subsistence are a riddle to their acquaintance.

The rapid vicissitudes of our revolutionary attempt of 1831 in Central Italy had, however, again set him afloat in society ; he had come back from a petty skirmish which our volunteers had with the Austrians at Fiorenzola, and the show of his hat and cloak pierced by musket-balls had proclaimed him a hero. He had since been a wanderer abroad like so many of us ; had travelled to Spain, and had seen what career was opened to Italian exiles in the ranks of the Constitutional Army of Queen Christina, then in the field against the brigand bands of Don Carlos, instancing the names of Borso de' Carminati, the brothers Durando, Fanti, Cialdini, and others, all of whom had gone through several steps of rapid promotion. He would himself, he said, have joined those gallant soldiers of fortune, but had no money to grease the palms of the officials who disposed of military commissions at the venal court of Madrid, and had travelled south to Gibraltar in the vain hope of raising the wind by the aid of the Jew and Genoese money-lenders in that place. There he had heard of me, and he came to me, knowing I would help him if I could, and trusting I could if I would. And showing me a diamond pin apparently of great value, a family

heirloom, as he said, he asked me if I would, on that security, accommodate him with the loan he had failed to negotiate at The Rock.

As I seemed taken by surprise, and meditating an answer, he looked at my face, he looked round at the walls of the apartment where I had received him, my little library, and asked questions about my position and prospects, wondering how “a man of my talents and spirit, in the prime of youth, and with the whole world before him, could consent to immure himself in that God-forsaken corner-hole of the African Continent with no better business than that of a *Marchand de Participes.*”

“ You come of a good stock,” said the flatterer, “ you are a soldier’s son, and I have seen you behave like a man under Austrian fire at Fiorenzola. For my own part I think for a gentleman there can be no other than a soldier’s trade—none else, especially for an Italian gentleman. Luck was against us in the Emilia five years ago. But every dog has his day : ours must surely come ; the day in which Italy will have need of the strong arms, of the brains and hearts of men like you ; and then happy will be those who, like Borso, and Fanti, and Cialdini, will have turned to good account the years of their exile, fitting themselves to fight their

country's battles by serving their apprenticeship in the battles of a sister nation now engaged in the furtherance of the common cause of freedom."

For his own part, he went on, warming as he spoke, it little mattered whether or not I could oblige him with what he had asked; it was, now that he had seen me, only on my account that he was concerned. He thought too highly of me, he said, he had too great a regard for me to allow me to wallow and rot in the slough of despond in which he saw me plunged. Thank Heaven! there was still time; he had just come at the right moment to save me. I knew Cialdini, of course. He had seen us together as classmates and friends at the University. Well, it was Cialdini who felt sure he had interest enough at the Madrid War Office to get him (Baiardi) a stand of colours in his own (Diego Leon's) regiment. Surely the influence that Cialdini was ready to put forth in behalf of a comparative stranger, could not fail to obtain as much or more for such a one as I was to him. It is only the first step, only the ensign's epaulets, a man requires in an active army. Luck and daring will do the rest. The war might be said to be just beginning. It was sure to be a long war; a very godsend to us youths with a future before us; a war which had fair chances of honour and

distinction to reward the highest merits, to realise the most exalted and legitimate aspirations.

Baiardi was an under-sized man, but with great depth of chest and breadth of shoulders. He had a dark complexion like a Spaniard's, a fine aristocratic cast of features, fiery eyes, a shrill clear voice like a clarion, an uncommon command of language. He stirred me to my inmost fibres. He had evidently read me through and through. He saw all that was romantic, quixotic in my disposition.

It was true: the career of arms had from earliest youth cast a most powerful spell over my imagination. Next to a poet's renown, what I would have prized above all things was a warrior's glory. Indeed I saw no reason why the same individual could not achieve success in both pursuits. It was true: I had been out at Fiorenzola; I was present at that insignificant brush with the Austrians, and was even the standard-bearer in our volunteer students' band. In spite of my dislike of everything French, I had been tempted, upon first being cast adrift into the world, to enlist in the Foreign Legion in Algeria. But no; I had no inclination to serve on foot, no wish for soldiering in time of peace. The horse was for me more than half the poetry of warfare. Awake or dreaming, I always

fancied myself mounted, always riding in the foremost rank. The trumpet brayed, the troopers shouted, the signal was given: Charge! charge! On I dashed, heading the squadron, at full speed, with loosened rein, with lowered point, my head bowed on the flowing mane, lashing with the flat of my sword the long neck of my steed, to urge him on in his headlong course. On we all dashed with thunder and lightning, till we came less than twenty yards within sight of the long line of the enemy's serried battalions, when there was a puff of smoke, the crack of a rifle, and I threw up my arms, jumped high on the saddle, and fell nevermore to rise, hit in mid career by the leaden messenger of death—surely the easiest, noblest, most enviable of all deaths!

And had it come to this? Was this to be the end of all my heroic fancies? Instead of a soldier's, a private tutor's life! a Dominie Sampson; as Baiardi expressed it in his quaint French phrase, "a dealer in participles!"

I stood up with a flushed face, with tears in my eyes, threw open the window, walked with rapid strides across the room, then stepped up to my visitor, grasped his hand and shook it with frantic energy.

"What you say, Baiardi," I exclaimed, "I have

repeated to myself a thousand times. It is my good star that brings you here. My cup of bitterness was full to the brim; it is now running over. But my mind is made up; I'll go with you."

And the matter was settled with but short deliberation. Go with him at once, indeed, I could not, for I was, as I said, a domestic servant, and must give a month's warning. But he would go back to Madrid with a letter of mine to Cialdini; he would secure an officer's brevet for me as well as for himself; and it would be time for me to follow when he acquainted me with the good result of our scheme. Meanwhile I was, of course, expected to supply the sinews of war. I had sixty Spanish dollars locked up in my desk; all that, with my habitual thrift, I had been able to save out of my previous year's salary. I took out the money, handed it to him in its black bag, pushed back the diamond bauble which he tendered as a pledge, laughed to scorn even his offer of a written acknowledgment, and walked with him to the boat which took him back to Gibraltar.

A month passed—two, three months. No news of Baiardi! Had the boat been swamped? Had he fallen in with Spanish brigands—been robbed and murdered? Or had he failed in his mission, and was he now

afraid or ashamed to give the doleful news of his ill success? These were all problems which I could not solve then, and cannot even to this day. I never saw Baiardi again, never heard of him till I revisited my native town after eighteen years' absence, when I was told he had been back at home for some time, broken in health and reputation; he had taken to evil courses, and died a beggar as he had lived. My letter to Cialdini, of which he was the bearer, never, as I learnt later on, reached its destination.

I had meanwhile made everything ready for a move. There had been a long and painful struggle between me and the consul's mother and every member of her family when I gave the first hints that I was under necessity to take my leave. They could hardly believe me. There was madness, they thought, in my resolution. I felt in my heart there was sheer ingratitude. The consul himself, who, young as he was, was remarkable for his shrewdness, pooh-poohed the whole affair; he was sure from the beginning that it would come to nothing; that Baiardi was a *chevalier d'industrie*, and it would turn out that I had been swindled out of my money.

As time passed and seemed amply to justify his most sinister conjectures, both himself and his family

naturally trusted that my disappointment would be a lesson for me ; that I should now see on which side my bread was buttered, and understand that I could only go farther to fare worse.

But it was a great mistake on their part. The die was cast ; my resolution was unalterable. I had made no secret of my intention ; I was ashamed to draw back. Tangiers had become for me a Rasselas Valley ; its very comforts made me uncomfortable. All my restlessness, my love of strife and adventure, had been aroused within me. I felt with Bulwer's Caleb Price in his rural parsonage that "to rest was to rot ;" that my years were gliding from me unenjoyed and unhonoured ; that there could be no life without activity, and that, if I wanted repose, there would always be more than enough of it in the grave.

"No," I exclaimed ; "the ice is broken ; I have spoken the last word. I have gone through the pang of leavetaking. My trunk is packed up. Go I must. The only question is—whither ?"

The civil war in Spain seemed to hang fire, and after Baiardi's defection I felt less confident as to my chances of success in that quarter. What I knew of the French and what I heard of the Spanish character gave me no exalted idea of the disposition of those

two nations towards their elder Latin sister. I had picked up a little English at Malta and Gibraltar, and my intercourse with the representatives of all European States at Tangiers had inspired me with a lively curiosity, and, I may say, with a genuine enthusiasm about John Bull.

"Rule Britannia!" I exclaimed. "God save the King! I'll go and seek my fortune in England."

I was always sure of a friendly welcome at the British Consulate. The Consul-General and *Chargeé d'Affaires* in Morocco was, at the time, Mr. Drummond Hay, the father and predecessor of Sir John, the present minister. The old gentleman was, or seemed to me, a thorough type of one of Walter Scott's Highlanders. He had the broad shoulders and the very long arms of a Rob Roy. He spoke to us foreigners a curious mixture of Foreign Office French and Morisco-Spanish. He had courteous, benevolent, somewhat gushing manners, but which left no doubt as to his frank cordiality and ready sympathy.

He heard me out with an expression of deepest interest. He found it very natural that I should weary of Tangerine life; very just that every man should try to better himself; but he was not equally sanguine about my projected English experiment. London, he said, was,

for a friendless stranger, a terrible place. Competition in every branch of business was appalling, overwhelming, crushing. I should be like a drop of water in a shoreless ocean. Of course, if I abided by my resolution, he would supply me with letters to such friends as he had. These would shake hands with me, ask me to dinner, admit me into the sanctuary of their families with a confiding hospitality such as I could find in no other country. But, alas ! people are all so busy ; always in so desperate a hurry in that huge Babylon ! They had such short memories ; they were so seldom at home ; and there were so many that took up their time with applications for advice and assistance !

“No !” he concluded. “All things considered, I could not recommend London. I would advise you to give England a wide berth—to Old England, at least, I should say ; for the world is large, and there are New Englands in every climate. Why not try America ? What should you think of the United States ? That is England at secondhand. A young country sure to have the best opening for a young man.” The English Consul spoke at great length and spoke sensibly. He evidently did not think me good enough for his country. “Let us try next door,” I said. “Let us call on his Yankee colleague.”

I was on equally friendly terms with the Honourable John Madison Leib, the United States Minister. Mr. Leib was still a young man, though a confirmed old bachelor, a tall man, portly, fair, and handsome, with a florid complexion, probably a Dutch or German by extraction. He was a well educated and travelled man, a scholar and a gentleman ; bland and dignified in the forenoon, though occasionally, it was whispered, somewhat flushed, thick in utterance, and not very steady on his legs after dinner.

I called upon him in the morning, and found him at work with his Vice-consul, Mr. Cornelius K. Mullowny, a carroty-headed, raw-boned youth, of Irish parentage.

Mr. Leib evinced no misgiving or hesitation. "To America, my dear sir ?" he said, after he had made me swallow a glass of Madeira and light one of his choice Havannahs, while I explained the object of my visit. "To be sure ! A big country that ! Room for everybody there ! You will find your place ready for you as if you had bespoken it beforehand. It is of men like you that want is particularly felt in our trading community. We have plenty of storekeepers, land agents, and politicians. Give us scholars and gentlemen, men of taste and refinement. I shall be more than happy—I shall be proud—to introduce you

to the best of my acquaintance. You shall have letters for New York, letters for Boston, letters for my friend, Edward Everett, Governor of Massachusetts, letters for my friend, old Josiah Quincy, President of Harvard University. Harvard is my Alma Mater. I graduated there in the year '20. They set great store in our colleges upon the study of modern languages. I know they are anxious at Harvard to create a professorship of Italian Literature."

The office of an instructor of youth, public or private, was not exactly the kind of employment I coveted in the New World; I had had enough of it in the Old. Was it worth my while, I considered, to cross the ocean with no better prospects? Was it not for a sword that I had wished to exchange the schoolmaster's ferule? But this was not the time for objections, and I made none. The essential was to quit Tangiers: to try a change of fortune by a change of climate. If I was to go, the sooner and the farther I went, the better. I would follow in the wake of Columbus and Cortes. Like this latter, I would burn my ships. Like the former, I would find a new world—a new life—or be drowned.

All was settled. All Tangiers heard of my hare-brained resolution. The whole many-tongued little

community made it the theme of their comments. For one who approved my daring, there were a hundred, I dare say, who deplored my insanity. But, openly at least, I only received expressions of sympathy, of hearty wishes for my welfare. I had never known myself so popular in the place. They crowded round me as if the whole of us had been one family, and I the Benjamin turned prodigal, only too likely to go to the bad, and perish the moment I was out of sight of home. Is there not always a revulsion of feelings even in favour of the most heinous criminal, when he is led out to be hanged ?

But the parting was over. I had cast up my accounts—drawn the arrears of my salary. I had, through Girolano Quartin, a Genoese corn-dealer and shipping-agent well known to me at Gibraltar, bespoken a berth on board the good ship *Independence*, Captain Ellis, which was to call at The Rock on its way from Malaga to New York.

On the 12th of August, at ten in the evening, I embarked in a smuggling tartana, with no very heavy luggage, and one hundred and fifty dollars in my purse, and was rowed across the Strait in six hours.

Three days later we left for New York.

CHAPTER II.

THE HERRING POND.

A ship of the good old times—A bad sailor—A bad vessel—The captain, mate, and crew—Fellow passengers—Isolation—Slow progress—Foul weather—Equinoctial gales—Night on the water—Morning on the water—in the trough of the sea—The tail of a storm—New York—Larboard or starboard?

THE good ship *Independence* was described as a brig-schooner of 150 tons. She sailed under the United States flag, and had on board a cargo of fresh and dry fruit from Malaga. Besides the master, Captain Ellis, and his mate, Mr. Atkins, she mustered four able seamen in the forecastle, and a negro, named Cato—cook, steward, and boots—in the galley. The passengers, in addition to myself, were a hideous monkey, the captain's pet, a small Scotch terrier (the mate's bedfellow), a huge Spanish ass (big as a Hereford bull, and milk-white like the Pope's palfrey, which was sent out to the New World for breed), and a dozen

fat fowls in a hen-coop, a handsome present of my kind and considerate friend, Mr. Drummond-Hay, who warned me that the fare on board, though it might be abundant, would certainly not be dainty, and that for anything like luxuries I should have to rely on my own private resources. Under the same apprehension the American Consul also sent on board for me a case containing twelve stone bottles of the best "Old Bourbon" whisky ; a glass of grog, in his opinion, being the best preservative against sea-sickness.

Our voyage lasted fifty-two days. And, to sum up the sufferings of that long odyssey, I need only state that of all those four-footed or feathered living beings of which I have made the enumeration, not one was fated to reach our journey's end ; that the ass and fowls were starved, the monkey sickened and died, the dog went mad and jumped overboard. The very best evidence of the superior constitution of man to that of the dumb creation may be found in the fact that the officers and crew survived all the hardships of that ill-starred navigation, and that I am still here to tell the tale of it.

This was my first experience of the dreaded ocean wave. My cruises hitherto had been limited to the tideless sea. I had steamed along the coast

from Genoa to Marseilles, and from Marseilles to Leghorn and Naples ; I had crossed twice between Toulon and Bastia or Ajaccio in Corsica, and had been, more lately, wafted from Naples to Malta and Tangiers, on board His Sicilian Majesty's man-of-war, *Principe Carlo*, an elegant brig carrying ten guns, and convoying the transport *San' Antonio*, a heavy *gabarre*, laden with some hundred tons of sulphur, a present, or rather tribute, of His Majesty of the Two Sicilies to the Emperor of Morocco. For even five years after the subjugation of Algeria that poor King Bomba still consented to bribe a piratical sovereign ; and this backsheesh was intended to propitiate that Sultan's goodwill in behalf of his Consul-General, and obtain for him the Imperial exequiatur.

There was nothing very dreadful in my recollection of Mediterranean seafaring life. We had had sixteen days contrary winds from Girgenti to Gibraltar, and I had proved myself an indifferent sailor. But we were surrounded with all the comfort and cleanliness of a first-class war-vessel, built expressly for the purposes of a royal yacht. We enjoyed the company of the witty Admiral De Cosa, and of his well-bred officers, and our table was supplied with all the luxury of an Italian cookery ; our patriotic feelings, when

we could sit at table under the influence of a fresh breeze, not disposing us to find fault with the savoury rice, or the macaroni swimming in tomato sauce, which constituted its rather too frequent ingredients.

But I was not prepared for the horrors that awaited me outside the Strait. No steamers had as yet ventured across the Atlantic ; the mails and passengers were at that time conveyed from England to America by the excellent packet-ships of the Liverpool and Bristol Navigation Companies. But the passage money charged by those fine sailing ships was rather above my means, even without reckoning the additional expense of the land journey between Gibraltar and the English harbour.

It was thus a necessity for me to sail directly from Gibraltar ; and my choice of a vessel was limited, for the trade of France and Spain with the Transatlantic ports was naturally carried on from their western coasts, and the Italian vessels, with no other outlet than the Strait, chose the early spring for their outward voyages, trusting in the prevalence of eastern breezes at that season ; while the fruit vessels from Malaga and all the eastern Spanish coast had to wait for the ripening of their goods, and to take their chance of the blustering autumn gales. My Genoese friend, Girolano Quartin, strongly recommended a

postponement of my departure, as the only vessels advertised at the time were these fruit ships, which were of the worst and charged as high prices as the best. But a wilful man must have his way, and take the consequences. I had to pay eighty dollars for my passage, and went through the ordeal of all the horrors that may befall a man at sea—minus shipwreck.

I went on board late in the evening of that memorable 15th of August, 1836, as the captain intended to weigh anchor at earliest dawn on the morrow. I was shown the way below into my state-room by the cook, and there left to grope in the dusk of that summer twilight as I best could. The stench of that horrible hole was enough to take away my breath and sicken me even in harbour. Everything on which my hand rested felt greasy and clammy, nothing either on deck or in the hold having apparently ever been washed, scoured, or even dusted since the vessel was launched. I threw myself into my berth, boots and all, and never stirred throughout that night and nearly the whole of the following day, indifferent and almost insensible to all that was going on around me, and feebly but firmly repelling the well-meant attentions of the captain and steward, who came now and then to cheer me up, tempting me with offers of rascers

of ham and bumpers of punch, all hot, and warning me that "if I gave in at first I should be laid up, helpless and miserable to the end of the voyage."

Towards evening, however, that same day, following their advice, I "made an effort," got up and dragged myself on deck, still weak and queasy, and stood for an hour with both elbows resting on the bulwark, looking eastwards, where the daylight still lingered on a faint outline of the coast; and I bade a mute farewell to the famous mountains towering up on either side of the Strait, above Cape Spartel on my right and Tarifa on the left—the Abila and Calpe of the Old World.

I was out of it at last, and I had literally taken my leap in the dark. I had torn myself from my moorings, and was like a waif adrift in the ocean, with no other prospects on landing than to be launched into another unknown sea of troubles and dangers. I stood there gazing and musing for a long time, feeling stunned and appalled by the consciousness of the desperate resolution I had taken. But the thing was done—I was afloat; I must sink or swim. I walked across the deck. On the other side there was the after-glow of the sunlight smiling as it slowly faded on the western waves: a heavenly smile, bidding me take heart, and

go forth with stout hope to meet the chances of the morrow.

It was not long, however, before my meditations were broken in upon by the captain and mate, who introduced themselves with many apologies for their unavoidable absence on the ship's business, which had prevented their formally welcoming me when I came on board on the previous evening; a ceremony, they added, for which there had subsequently been no opportunity while I was lying prostrate under that terrible marine scourge which makes a man loathe himself and the whole world besides. They trusted I should soon fully recover, and that the voyage, in which we were to be together probably for two or three weeks, would be satisfactory to me as it was sure to be to them.

This is all I was able to make out of their rather lengthy and rambling address, in which the words "feeling queer," "sea-legs," and "Boston gals," most frequently occurred, and which was to me a most hopeless jumble and rigmarole. For the little English I had at my disposal had been learnt upon books; and it was still with the utmost difficulty that I could follow my kind instructors, Mr. Thompson, a Scotch minister at Malta, and Mr. Taylor, the British chaplain

at Tangiers, when they read aloud to me, slowly and distinctly, a few pages out of Goldsmith's "Vicar of Wakefield," or Washington Irving's "Tales of a Traveller"—the first works in which I was made to spell out the language of Shakespeare.

I had only too soon ample opportunity to become acquainted with the peculiarities of these two worthy officers and of the five other individuals constituting with them the floating microcosm in which I found myself so helpless and utter a stranger.

The Captain was a little man, hardly reaching the middle size, lean and lank, but tough and wiry, with sandy hair, a sallow complexion, fishy eyes, a hatchet face, and sour look, which reminded me of a crab-apple. He came up to the ideal I had, in my silly imagination, conceived of the typical Yankee—a white-livered man, with all his blood turned to gall, and a natural intelligence hardened into low cunning. He was talkative, inquisitive, very curious about me, as "the first Eye-talian," he said, "he had ever met that was not an organ-grinder or immidge-seller." He followed me up and down as I paced the deck, standing in my way, button-holing me, and driving me into a corner; and entertained me by the hour in his close, sharp, jerky, New England sea-jargon, plying me with ques-

tions upon questions, little hoping to get an answer, little caring to be understood or listened to; the dialogue soon sinking to a pattering monologue, in which all I could make out was that "What with the bigness of his country, and Bostin gals, mint juleps and sherry cobblers, and dollars, and again dollars, and many dollars," I had only to wait till I came in sight of Sandy Hook, and would soon see what a Paradise "'Merikey" would be for me.

His lieutenant or mate, Mr. Atkins, was a native of Great Britain—a western man, Welshman or Cornishman, I believe—of low stature but a powerful frame, a man between forty and fifty, dark and weather-beaten, with an expression of great energy and strong character in his face; not ill-natured, but quick-tempered, apt to break out in sudden and dangerous squalls of ungovernable passion. The crew of four sailors had been picked out of the common run of loose seamen in New York harbour. There were eight at the start; but half of them had been left behind at Malaga, being wanted by the Spanish police in consequence of a scuffle with the natives, in which blood was spilt. Of the remaining four, three were American-Irish; the fourth was a Swede, a tall, handsome man, with blue eyes, and a brow which

might have befitted one of the old Norse sea-kings. The black cook and steward was a runaway slave from Georgia, black as ebony, much fagged and kicked about, but always grinning and singing, merry as a cricket. But all this crew—white men and black, sailors and officers—seemed to be perpetually at odds with one another, morning, noon, and night; and the swearing on board was as incessant and awful as that of “our army in Flanders.”

No amount of oaths, however, had power to hasten our progress. The *Independence* was described in the advertising sheets as a “clipper;” and she was perhaps not a badly-built boat. But she was not copper-bottomed; she had not been in dock for several years, and was foul with barnacles, which considerably lessened her speed. Captain Ellis, anxious to avoid an unnecessary struggle with adverse elements, and hoping, if he went down to a lower degree of latitude, to fall in with the trade winds which seldom fail at certain seasons of the year, steered to the south-west till we reached Teneriffe in the Canary Islands; then he made his way back to Madeira, and further up to the Azores—veering and tacking right and left at random, as I thought, little heeding the remarks of the mate, with whom he had high words

on the subject. For, as I learnt afterwards, the mate had at least the experience of many years' service, though in a subordinate capacity; while the captain had never been in command, never crossed the Atlantic in any former voyage, his employment having been limited to the coasting trade, hardly ever a hundred miles beyond Cape Cod. Strange to say, it was not yet customary in America to exact from the masters of merchant vessels a certain course of studies in a nautical school or an examination proving their practical proficiency, and entitling them to an officer's rank. The mercantile marine in the United States was (at that time, for, I believe, there has been some change since) established on thorough Free-Trade principles. It was for the owners and merchants or for the shipping agents to see to whom they entrusted their vessels and cargoes; it was for the passengers to consider in whose hands they would venture their lives.

We went thus throughout the latter end of August alternating between light contrary winds and dead calm, broiling in a semi-tropical sun, and following a zigzag line in which there seemed to be as much regress as progress. The novelty of the situation soon wore off. The sublimity of all that boundless expanse of water, the

balminess of that free atmosphere at daybreak, the gorgeousness of those vivid tints in the autumnal sunset, the distant view of a grand frigate or Indiaman in full sail, the sudden visit of a flying fish gasping on deck, or that of an albatross hovering round us, or the tumbling and gambolling of a herd of porpoises in our wake, all the sights and incidents making up the delights and diversions of a seafaring life soon began to 'pall upon me, and all I felt was its sameness and solitude, its forced silence and inaction, its dirt and discomfort. After a week's fasting on sardines and biscuits I tried to sit at table in the captain's cabin with the two officers, and to partake of the beans and bacon, Irish stews, and suet puddings that were served up by the steward as the ordinary noontide meal. But I had barely taken my place when I was seized round the neck by two black hands and hairy arms, and felt on my face the hot breath from a chattering mouth close to my ears. I turned and jumped up not a little startled, and found it was Jack, the captain's horrid monkey, who resented my intrusion into what was his habitual chair at the state dinner. A smart whack of the captain's whip soon freed me from the monster's hug, but he instantly flew at a bound from the chair upon the table itself, uttering

piercing shrieks, and stood there triumphant, grimacing, and gibbering, treading and even squatting freely on the dishes, upsetting decanters and cruet-stands, helping himself out of his master's plate, and reminding me of the foul harpies as they pounced and gorged on the viands in Phineus' banqueting-hall, ravaging the well-spread board, defiling and corrupting what they did not devour.

I rushed up on deck with a lump at my throat as if I was choking, sick, and mad with impotent wrath, while volleys of mutual upbraiding and savage oaths were interchanged between the two remaining below; the mate vowing he would throttle the nasty irrepressible brute, Jack; the captain declaring that he would retaliate by shooting his lieutenant's terrier, though poor Snap was a well-behaved, inoffensive little cur, crouching patiently and humbly under his master's seat, seldom venturing to call attention to his wants by a piteous whine, and only showing himself when put through his paces and bidden to stand up on his hind legs and beg.

For my own part I could not, of course, be expected to renew the revolting experiment. Whenever an hour of smooth sea allowed me to rise from the horrors of my berth and the stifling seclusion of the state-room,

I sat on deck and forced myself to swallow such scraps of food as the cook could be coaxed to serve up, usually crusts of hard biscuit and hunches of salt fish or meat. I was fortunately never very dainty or particular about my food, for a strong appetite, a blunt sense of smell and taste, early habits, and the necessities of a wandering life had taught me to eat heartily whatever was laid before me, whether hot or cold, over or underdone, the only condition being that there should be nothing unclean, whereas on board of the *Independence* uncleanness was all-pervading.

We had, in the meanwhile, reached the end of August. The captain, who, on leaving the Strait, had unnecessarily, as it appeared to me, wandered too far south, seemed now bent on repairing his mistake by running with as little reason or discretion in the opposite direction. Both himself and his mate made up their logs, took regular observations of the sun at noon, and calculated the distances; but they had no chronometers, and they showed throughout a frantic eagerness to go out of their way to have speech of such craft as happened to meet us; a circumstance, as I afterwards understood, which might have suggested a suspicion that they had lost their reckoning of the degree of longitude and were uncertain as to the extent

of their westward progress. The days rapidly waxing shorter, the cooling temperature, and a more intense calmness after sunset, ought to have warned them that they had reached a higher latitude, and that they must prepare themselves for a change in the weather.

On the 5th of September—I am not sure of the date, though I have good reason to remember it—at the close of day, there was a wonderful stillness in the air; the broad Atlantic wave heaved and subsided as softly and smoothly as the bosom of a sleeping beauty; and we were all on deck, the men awed into silence, sitting with their arms crossed on their breasts, and I very nearly lulled to sleep by the lazy rocking of the weary vessel, when something like a film gathered round the crimson disc of the declining sun, and a little black cloud—the merest speck, “no bigger than a man’s hand”—cast its ominous shadow on the western waters. Presently a faint moan diffused itself through that still atmosphere, and darkness settled on the face of the deep. The captain and mate looked at each other with a significant nod. The boatswain’s whistle was heard; and before we were many minutes older, we were scudding on the wings of the wind, under closely-reefed canvas, flying at a rate of which

that poor cranky *Independence* could never have been thought capable.

We were in for the equinoctial tempests !

Soon the breeze freshened to a gale—the gale rose to a hurricane. It drove huge, dense masses of storm-clouds before it, the roar of the wind blending with the growl of the thunder which they nursed in their bosom ; its violence whirling and driving through the air the big rain-drops and the heavy hailstones with which they were laden.

More than an hour elapsed before I could tear myself from the appalling yet fascinating sight of that sudden commotion. But by this time the sea was up ; the waves rose mountain-high ; they danced madly around us ; they dashed against us, broke upon us, slapping us in the face with a thump that forced our frail bark to recoil, rearing, and shivering, and pouring in a warm flood which swept again and again over us, threatening to wash everything, and at any rate poor helpless me overboard.

I rose with reluctance, made my way abaft, along the bulwark, clinging to it like grim death ; then tottered across those few feet of the deck with outstretched arms to reach the companion-way ; and down I went into that foul sink of all uncleanness below, which

was my only refuge, yet merely the thought of which was sufficient to asphyxiate and sicken me to death.

I can hardly say how long I had been lying there, slowly sinking into that comatose state which resembled and came near—yet was not—insensibility, when I was startled and shaken by a terrific lurch, which hurled me from my berth to the floor, and gave me the impression that the end of all things was at hand. We had shipped a sea.

Our man at the helm had run full tilt into a mighty wave—a monster wave—which seemed for a moment to swallow and sink us. There was a terrific rush of water; the flood made its way down the steps and through the hatches, which the men had neglected to make fast; down came the deluge, invading the captain's cabin, overrunning the staterooms on its right and left, where I and the mate had our sleeping quarters, and filling our very berths. There ensued a loud rattle and clatter of shattered crockery; a swimming about of chairs and tables; a round dance with *chassez-croisez* of all movable furniture; till a wretched stool knocked me on the head where I had fallen, and where I lay stunned and bewildered, and drenched through the blankets and clothes even to the skin.

The end of things was not yet, however. The wave passed. The brave ship *Independence* righted herself, shook herself, and stood out, like a spaniel throwing up his forepaws and flapping his ears; and on she struggled, sobered and cautioned, but undaunted, on her course.

For three days and three nights there was no abatement in the war of elements. I picked myself up, not without a great effort, went back to my berth, tucked and propped myself in to guard against the chance of new catastrophes, and there I remained for three days and three nights, prostrate in all that wet, helpless and motionless, my back aching, my elbows bruised by the recent fall, listening to the howling winds, the churning waters, the snapping of the sails, the rattle of the blocks and ropes of the overstrained rigging, the plaintive notes and measured tramp of the men as they tacked, the harsh voices and withering blasphemies of their commanders inveighing against the slowness and stupidity of those "d——d lubbers." There was I, all alone and inactive in the midst of that anxious bustle, with no strength to stir, no breath to call out, no one to hear or heed me however loud I might call.

A blessing on sea-sickness! It is an illness that

cures all other ailments ; a horror that deadens the sense of all other horrors. I had only to lie still, to close my eyes, and against all thoughts, all fears, all sufferings, I found relief in a lethargy that amounted to suspended animation. Great has been at all times with me the power of sleep. What with my love of the fresh morning air, my assiduous worship of the sun at its rise and setting, and my habit of moonlight rambling, I must plead guilty of having too often burnt the candle at both ends ; and I ran up on the score of my night rest a long bill with Nature for which she only could, and did actually repay herself with interest, when she caught me in bed with some of the ills that our flesh is heir to. For measles and mumps and other juvenile complaints, sleep was always my best, my only doctor ; and as, after leaving the nursery, it was, thank heaven ! very seldom that anything ailed me on land, Nature had to wait till she had me in her power at sea, when, after a few hours' agony, sea-sickness subsided into a dozing stupor, acting both on physical and moral sufferings with the all-killing influence of magnetism or chloroform. I had a three days' and three nights' nap.

From that long deathlike trance I might, perhaps,

never have waked had there not been something like a truce in the din amidst which I lost consciousness. But on the fourth day, at earliest dawn, there seemed to be a lull in the storm. I missed the heavy rolling of the ship, and was startled by the awful silence around me. I stood up, jumped on my feet to the floor, still drowsy and dazed, wondering where we were, what had become of us. I groped and tottered up the steps, and reached the deck, where an unexpected sight awaited me. The horizon had shrunk within a few yards' compass, leaving but a slice of deep blue sky visible, with the sickle of the waning moon, and Venus as a morning star sparkling in the west. We lay for one moment, helpless as it seemed, in a deep hollow, jammed in between two enormous waves, reared up in the shape of two great mountain-masses, on the top of one of which, on our right, a large gull or sea-eagle poised himself on his outspread wings: we were in the trough of the sea. One moment later we surged slowly on the top of the wave. There was evidently a change in the weather. The wind had fallen, but the waves were as yet only imperceptibly subsiding.

I looked round. On the deck was perfect solitude. The men had furled up every rag of their sails; they

had lashed their helm to the bulwark, and allowed their vessel to drift like a log.

Poor fellows! They had done all that man's courage and endurance—and strong drink—could achieve. They were exhausted, half-starved, wet to the skin, overpowered by sleep. They had sunk into that apathy that comes of despair. The four sailors had slunk away and gone below one by one, followed by the captain. In the launch hanging astern lay Mr. Atkins, the mate, with his faithful dog at his feet on one side, and Cato, the black cook, on the other—all fast asleep. Over all of us was the Sailor's Providence—that "sweet little cherub," of whom Dibdin sang, "that sits up aloft to watch o'er the life of poor Jack."

At noon of the same day the sea had gone down; we were in a perfect calm. All hands were up, every man in his place. The helmsman at the wheel; the men aloft; the captain and the mate walking fore and aft; the cook relighting his fire in the galley. Every one had put on his fine-weather look. Presently the sails were set; they flapped lazily in a faint north-western breeze. But alas! That breeze soon veered to the west and south-west. Towards evening the fatal little black dot on the horizon warned us that our troubles were not over yet.

But why should I prolong the woeful tale? For nearly three weeks we had to run the gauntlet of those fearful autumnal squalls. It was always the same story. There was stillness in the air and water for a few hours every morning; but every evening seemed to unchain all the fiends of the sea apparently bent on our destruction. We did not split, however, we did not founder, we escaped with merely the fear of it. At the end of the three weeks the fury of the elements was at last thoroughly spent, and we were allowed to proceed slowly but safely on our course. We had now full time to count up our losses, and realise all the awkwardness of our situation. The captain had reckoned on the average month's passage, and was very scantily prepared even for that. All his fresh provisions, meat and vegetable, had been used up even before the gale set in. The same was the case with the grain for my twelve fat fowls, whose coop was now empty, though not one of them had been killed for the table; one by one those starved birds had followed the donkey and the monkey overboard. My Bourbon whisky had also disappeared, but had at least not been wasted; for when the cook uncorked one bottle and offered me a drop of it for a cordial, I pushed back the glass, bidding him "drink it himself," an order

which he interpreted so literally, that by the time I inquired after the liquor all the twelve bottles were dry, and the only doubt remaining was whether the blackie had been equal to the task of drinking them all himself, or had been aided in its accomplishment by some of the crew or officers. We had thus to fall back on our resources of salt beef or fish, and sailors' biscuits; but sea water had broken into the stores and stove in the barrels. The bread was musty and literally rotten; the meat, "alive." The smell of it was enough to knock a man down. I had lived almost exclusively on sleep throughout the rough part of the voyage, but was now wide-awake; every trace of sea-sickness had left me, and keen was the edge of my appetite. I asked for coffee; it was all gone. Its substitute was an infusion of biscuit burnt to charcoal, and pounded to fine black dust. I called for sugar; none remained, white or brown, but I could have "molasses." I bethought myself of the cargo of fruit that we had all safe under hatches. "Could I have a few dry figs or dates?" But the captain stared at me with horror. He would "die a thousand deaths ere he would touch anything entrusted to his seaman's honour."

The prospect was not cheering. I asked how long

it might be before we reached New York. "How could he tell? He had lost all account of time and place." He showed me the log: $46^{\circ} 48' N. L.$; $77^{\circ} 5' W. L.$ Prodigious! By his reckoning we were half-way across the American continent. The waters we crossed must be those of Lake Huron or Ontario!

There was a big book on the captain's table, "Bowditch's American Navigator." That and the Bible constituted all the library on board. I pored over the pages of that nautical guide, which, as far as I could spell through it, seemed to me a very creditable performance. It taught how the longitude could be ascertained by the phases of the moon, or by the position of Jupiter's satellites. I asked whether I could help him in his observations, and even tendered a powerful opera-glass, available in some degree for astronomical purposes. He answered gruffly that Bowditch was a humbug, and he never read a line of it.

I need hardly say how I lived through the remaining ten days of the voyage. The weather had become favourable, but the wind was light and fickle, and our progress was slow to the very end. Adversity had soured the temper of men and officers; the quarrelling was incessant; the language shocking;

I even saw knives drawn, though no blood was actually spilt. I lay down on deck day and night, wrapped in blankets, reading when I did not slumber. Sleep was to some extent a luller of hunger, as it had been of nausea; but I am bound to confess that before long "fasting got the mastery of horror," and I ate of the nastiness of that salt-beef and biscuit, and drank of that coffee, sweetened with treacle, with an eagerness which an alderman at his turtle-feast might have envied.

At last, after a good deal of beating about north and south, we fell in with a Cape Cod pilot, who brought us in sight of Sandy Hook and Highland Neversink, and steered us to one of the wharves on the New York East River. It was the 7th of October. The whole bay and the banks of the river on all sides were blushing with that variety of vivid tints which gives the autumnal foliage of a North American landscape a brilliancy unknown to our richest Old World woodland scenery: New York harbour must look like a fancy picture to any one landing there after a prosperous voyage. To me after so much suffering it was a haven of bliss.

For the *Independence*, the end of the navigation was as disastrous as the whole run had been. As

we came up to the landing-place, the pilot, of course, had the command or guidance of the ship ; the captain was at the wheel, steering. A little yacht, moored to the pier-head, stood in our way. The pilot, as he thought and stated, called out "Starboard ;" and the order, if obeyed, would have carried us clear of the little craft. But the captain, as he contended, heard or understood "Larboard," and he went plump at the yacht, crushing its bow against the square blocks of the granite pier.

There ensued a great hubbub, and confused clamour of voices. The pilot and our captain threw upon one another the blame of that blundering mishap. The man in charge of the yacht, with many of the bystanders, boarded us, breathing vengeance upon the d——d lubberly bunglers, and claiming heavy damages. The police interfered, and I, fearing I might be pulled up and brought into Court as a witness on a matter where I could give no opinion, threw my luggage on the shoulders of two wharf-porters who solicited my custom in negro Yankee-French, and jumped after them, never stopping even to utter a hearty curse on the wretched vessel, which could not have done worse for me than it had, unless it had actually gone down to Davy's locker with me.

Half-an-hour later, 10 o'clock, a.m., I was seated in an upper room of one of the great hotels in Broadway—the New York Hotel, if I well remember—the black waiter volunteering the welcome information that “feeding time” was one o’clock in the afternoon.

CHAPTER III.

THE NEW WORLD.

New York—Broadway—A hotel dinner—A volunteer guide—Useless letters—New York to Boston—Edward Everett—Cold comfort—An Italian evening—Gloomy thoughts in a bright moonlight.

I WENT out into Broadway, and was soon borne along by the crowd on the wide granite footpaths, following the tide which set in on one side towards Union Square, on the other to the Battery. New York might at that time be described as a town with one street. Broadway was its only real thoroughfare, with the Bowery as an appendage. I had seen nothing like it, unless it might be the Toledo at Naples; a street which might boast ten times the noise, but not half the actual movement of this Transatlantic Babylon. I walked twice or three times from end to end, gazing at that long row of big hotels, at the muster of staring shop-windows, at the odd medley of Grecian colonnades, and Dutch

gables in front of the many banking or “meeting” houses ; listening vacantly to the incessant ocean-like roll of omnibuses, hackney coaches, and heavy-laden vans of that busiest of human ant-hills.

The impression of novelty, however, was not very deep, and soon wore off. I thought too much of my own affairs at that time not to have something of the feelings of the Doge of Genoa at the Grand Monarch’s Court. What struck me as the wonder of wonders in the place was “to see myself there.”

“What ?” I said to myself, “was I really in America—alone in a world to which I came unbidden, unexpected, utterly unknown, with barely the most rudimentary acquaintance with its language, and no knowledge of its ways, its laws and customs ; without one friend, with credentials, the value of which was yet to be tested, and with only forty poor dollars in my pocket ? I looked at everybody I met ; and the multitude of those blank, uninteresting, unsympathising faces chilled and dismayed me. I had been awakened early as we came in sight of land ; had tasted no food or drink ; had not sat down one minute, as I was busy packing. A little faintness and fatigue ; a little drooping and misgiving must seem only too natural. How often at sea had I felt that, what with heavy gales

and bad seamanship, the *Independence* would come to grief? And now, could I congratulate myself on my escape? Could I foresee what tempests awaited me on shore? But my spirits soon revived. I had come to sink or swim. At sea I had not foundered; on shore I should not perish.

I re-entered the hotel with a firm step and walked into the bar, through which was the way to the dining-hall. It wanted a quarter to one o'clock, and it was only a minute or two before the hour struck, that the business men of Wall Street and the Stock Exchange began to troop in, and, huddled together at the still closed doors, waiting for the rush by which Americans of that class used at that time to take their public dining-tables by storm. In I went with the rest and took my place in a corner near the door whence I could survey what was to me a novel scene.

Before me all over the long table were huge joints of meat and dishes of smoking hashes and stews, with all the usual profusion of vegetables, potato, cabbage, "squash," hominy, apple and cranberry tart, and other dainties for which America is noted, and with which every plate was piled up before it was handed over to the consumer. The waiters (they were all negroes at that hotel) went round to each guest, who pointed out

by words and signs the various items of the fare to which he wished to be helped, for “they saw their dinner.” One of these blackies came to me and uttered some words which might have been Caffre or Ashantee for aught I could make out; another followed, and a third with the same effect. At last they held a brief consultation among themselves and laid before me a plateful of their own choice, an *omnium gatherum* with which I had little reason, and, hungry as I was, no inclination to find fault.

Some minutes elapsed before I took my eyes off my plate. But, ravenously as I was eating myself, I perceived that I could keep no pace with my neighbours, who bolted the manifold contents of their plates in about ten minutes, when most of them got up, always in the same hot haste and left the room. These, I supposed, were mere clerks and the small fry of the Stock Exchange. But some of their elders and “*bettters*”—oil-merchants, tea-dealers, wholesale ironmongers, dry-goods men, and general outfitters, with all the hierarchy of rising financiers—“*fortunati, quorum jam moenia surgunt*,” or in plain words, whose fortunes were half made—all these tarried behind, moved up to the other end of the table, sat down with a sigh of relief, and there was a call for Madeira.

No other drink than water had appeared on the board during the repast. But wine, nuts, almonds, etc., came in now as dessert. Madeira was at that time the American's nectar. It rose to absurdly extravagant prices, twelve dollars, at the great hotels. But at auctions wine that had twice or more sailed round the Cape would fetch even double that money. The guests were apparently all friends, and as each bottle was uncorked, the one who called for it sent it round to his cronies near and far, and there was nodding and hob-nobbing all round. But there was no exhilaration or excitement. It was all quiet, silent swilling, without even the pretext of conviviality.

I took no wine, but sat still looking around me, watching the people's ways, not without amusement, when I became aware that my next neighbour's glass was also empty, and had seemingly no chance of being filled, the man's only business evidently being to abide there and stare at me. He was a little scrubby fellow in a threadbare suit, who in Europe might have been taken for a dissenting minister, a schoolmaster, or a bankrupt undertaker, but whose business in this new country I was then at a loss to guess, and have yet even now to learn. As I turned to him, and, catching his eye, slightly nodded, he took heart to

address me in a flow of words from which I could only make out that he perceived I was a stranger, and volunteered his assistance. He gave his name as Peter C. Sconce. I have always flattered myself on my gifts as a physiognomist. I scanned his countenance for about half a minute, and concluded that I might trust him. I made him understand that I had no friends or connections in America; but that I was the bearer of good letters of introduction; and ushering him into my room on the upper floor, I laid before him my budget. I had five letters for Boston and as many for New York. Of these latter one was for the Honourable Hosea R. Thompson, a Member of the Senate at Washington; a great and influential personage, as Sconce averred, and who resided, when in New York, at our own hotel; but who had just "embarked for his European tour on the first of that very month." The other letter was addressed to Walter H. Ingram, Esquire, without any other designation. We looked out the name in the New York directory. There were several Inggrams; two Walter Inggrams; but only one Walter H. Ingram. His address was "77, India Wharf," or, as my kind guide pronounced it, "Injia hhhwaourf," rolling it twice or three times through his nose.

We had a very fatiguing journey to the wharf, and a great deal of trouble looking for No. 77 ; but here at last was the name, Walter H. Ingram, written on a little tinman, painter, and glazier's shop in an out-of-the-way corner ; and here was our man—not an “esquire,” but only a humble mechanic—quite at my service if I wanted any job in his line, but who had never heard the name of the writer of the letter, and could not accept the said letter as intended for himself.

Back we went to the hotel, hired a hackney coach to drive up to the two Walter Ingolds, and, next, to the other Ingolds, and came back after several hours' bootless quest, satisfied that my friend the American consul in Morocco had written—or, at least, addressed—that letter after dinner, when he was not responsible for his doings. There was no such man known either among the New York Ingolds or among their numerous and, to them, well-known kindred elsewhere.

I had now enough of New York. In the evening I took leave of my kind assistant and guide, Peter C. Sconce, who seemed greatly surprised and half-offended when I slipped two dollars between his fingers ; and on the morrow I had myself conveyed to the early

boat that took me to Providence, Rhode Island, and there I was just in time for the night train of one of the first railway lines opened for traffic in either hemisphere. And thus, after a twenty-four hours' journey by sea and land, I reached Boston, and alighted on the steps of the Tremont House.

After a hurried breakfast, I went down to the hotel bar and made the necessary inquiries about the gentlemen whose acquaintance I was anxious to make. This time there were no difficulties to be met. Mr. Everett was the governor of the State of Massachusetts, and his residence was at Charlestown, a popular suburb of Boston, across the estuary of the River Charles, a place easily to be reached by omnibus.

I need not lose much time in a description of the person or character of the Honourable Edward Everett, as he was for several years in London, as United States Minister to the Court of St. James', and must now be well remembered by all who had the honour of his acquaintance. He was at the time forty-two years old ; tall, flat-chested, with a white complexion, large, prominent eyes, a stately forehead, a bland, grave countenance. He spoke with the purest English accent, and was remarkable for his sedate, well-bred, but somewhat stiff, overdone English reserve. Like

many of the most polished Americans I have known, he seemed to labour under a double restraint: he was too anxious to keep his feelings under control; too much afraid of falling into some Yankee solecism of idiom or manner.

He had been brought up at Harvard College, or University, where in early youth he was appointed Greek Professor. But extreme diffidence, love of knowledge, or ambition, prompted him to exchange his place as a teacher for that of a student, and he proceeded from Cambridge, Mass., to Göttingen, where he resided for several years, and whence he only came back after a prolonged European tour.

With that wonderful versatility that seems to fit every American for a Jack-of-all-trades and master of many, Mr. Everett, on his return to New England, gave up the professor's chair, which had been kept vacant for him, for a preacher's pulpit, and became a minister of the Unitarian persuasion or sect, then the fashionable and morally dominant form of Christianity in his native community.

He achieved an almost unprecedented popularity as a sacred orator, and I shall never forget my friend Miss Dwight, and other ladies, whose eyes filled with tears at the bare recollection of the "sweet white

hand" which the young divine waved in the air in the most thrilling moments of his heart-winning perorations—a painful recollection; for, after achieving complete success, he gave up the cure of souls, and betook himself to a political career, both he and his brother Alexander being returned as members of the House of Representatives at Washington.

Mr. Edward Everett was thought to have improved his fortunes by his marriage with a daughter of Peter C. Brooks, one of the wealthiest Boston merchants; but he continued to live in his usual modest and frugal style; and it was in a house of no great pretensions that I found him, even now, when he had risen to the highest position as governor of his native state.

He met me with consummate courtesy, walking half-way across the room, holding in his left hand the card and letter of introduction I had sent up to him, while the right pressed mine with a benevolent, but not what might be called a hearty squeeze. He showed the way to the fireplace, motioned me to a chair, welcomed me to America, put a few questions about Italy, about my travels, etc., then, looking very grave, and somewhat concerned, he proceeded to business.

"I must tell you, sir, that I am not a little at

a loss to make out Mr. Consul Leib's meaning. He sends you here, he says, because he is aware we are in want of an Italian Professor at Harvard, and he deems you highly qualified for the office. But the fact is, we have, and have had for several years, not a professor, but a teacher of Italian at our Cambridge, and that is your countryman, Mr. Pietro Bachi, a highly accomplished gentleman, with whom I shall be most happy to make you acquainted. There are only teachers of modern languages at our University, and above them all we appoint a Professor of General Continental European Literature; a place now filled by Mr. Longfellow, who has succeeded Mr. George Ticknor."

He looked at me when he had spoken, but I had no words to answer; I was grieved, but hardly disappointed by the downfall of my hopes in that quarter; for my vain search after the apocryphal Walter H. Ingram at New York, had greatly shaken my confidence in the sense and information of Mr. Consul Leib. I felt now, as I had expected, that it would not be without a hard struggle that I could obtain a footing on this slippery and stubborn, though on the whole friendly and hospitable Yankeeland.

I sat silent for two or three minutes, looking down

at the fender; but at last raised my eyes to the governor's face and spoke up boldly:

"Then, if I understood your Excellency, all I have to do is to go back to the place I came from."

He looked as if such a resolution on my part would be a great relief to him. He was not a little embarrassed, to be sure; but his innate kindness did not allow him to take me at my word, and rid himself of all trouble on such easy terms.

"I should be very sorry," he said, softening his voice to almost tenderness, "if I had said anything discouraging. But I am sure your coming to this country was the act of your own deliberate will. You have seen nothing of it as yet; I think you should give it a trial. There is room for everybody in this vast continent; and you belong to a class of men, as Mr. Leib writes, of whom we are particularly in need. Your best course is to settle among us and just feel your way."

He then turned the conversation from the painful topic. We went back to our talk about my country, the study of languages, Greek literature, etc., etc. Though he was a great linguist, it was only in cases of extreme necessity that he spoke in any other language than his own; his principle being that if

one of the talkers was to be embarrassed and at a disadvantage, it should be rather his interlocutor than himself; whilst for my own part I was glad that such was his choice, as when any language has to be murdered, I always prefer that it should be any other than mine. But he spoke so slowly and distinctly, that I lost not one word of what he said, and, strange enough, I found it easy to make myself understood; for so strong is in me the magnetism of sympathy, that I seemed, as he spoke, to catch both his grammar and his accent, just as I caught that of Captain Ellis on board the *Independence*, and that of Peter C. Sconce at the New York Hotel. It is a chameleon-like sympathy that makes it even difficult for me to converse with a stutterer without echoing and involuntarily seeming to mimic his stuttering.

I was so delighted with him that, when at last I stood up to take leave, I had forgotten my errand, and laid aside every thought of my troubles. He recalled me to my senses by asking my address, and bidding me wait one minute while he wrote a line to introduce me to my countryman, Signor Pietro Bachi.

“One moment, your Excellency,” I said, as he was taking up the pen, and referring to my card. “I beg you to introduce me under my real name.”

"Luigi Mariotti," he read. "Is it not that?"

"It is not," I replied. "Has not Mr. Leib's letter explained all?"

For I had told Mr. Leib, and everyone in Tangiers was aware, that the name of Mariotti had only been assumed three years before when I wished to re-enter Italy from Switzerland, my own name being then under the ban, and that I had been obliged to stick to that pseudonym both at Naples and wherever I was domesticated with the family of the Neapolitan consul, because he, although a Liberal, was also a functionary of King Bomba, and might have been compromised by harbouring a political refugee, had he not at least endeavoured to save appearances. Mr. Leib was fully acquainted with the circumstances, and when I begged him to drop my *alias*, and write down my real name, though he observed that, "One name would be as good as another in America," he had promised to comply with my request. But by the time he wrote his letters he had apparently forgotten everything about it.

"Luigi Mariotti," the governor repeated, "it is so written here." And he showed me the consul's letter.

I had to go once more through the awkward

explanation; but I perceived to my great dismay that it was not altogether satisfactory; and that, as Mr. Leib's testimony was evidently of little value, my statements did not convey as strong a conviction to the governor's mind as their truthfulness fully deserved. I had evidently fallen fifty per cent. in this good man's estimation.

"Mr. Leib was decidedly wrong," he observed, coldly. "But you must perceive that he leaves me no choice in the matter. You will easily account for the circumstances when you have established your position in the country, when, indeed, as Mr. Leib told you, one name will be as good as another; Mr. Bachi himself laboured when he came here under the same difficulties. His real name is Batolo."

The line for Mr. Bachi was soon written, and the governor accompanied me to the door with punctilious, but somewhat frigid ceremony, tendering me not the whole hand but only the fore and middle finger, as if he had been a Pope blessing me.

Pietro Bachi lived in Brattle Street, then a low locality, given up to pawnbrokers, gin-shops, and coach and omnibus offices. He was a Sicilian of good family, and had left Palermo for some cause which he did not choose to explain. Landing in Boston he had taken at

once to the business of a teacher of languages, as Piero Maroncelli and some of his fellow-prisoners released from Spielberg had done before him. Unlike their Neapolitan neighbours, the Sicilians have true gentlemanly instincts, and their address is generally more winning than that of the Italians of any other province. Bachi was, besides, a well-educated man ; he won at once a very extensive popularity, published a thoroughly good grammar, and was held in high esteem as a scholar. He had had, indeed, the misfortune of being entrapped into a low marriage with a woman who deserted him, but not before she had inoculated him with her own inordinate propensity for drink. By this he had, of course, considerably lost his footing in the best society ; but it had hardly affected his professional interests. He kept his place as a teacher in Harvard University, and though he lived in solitary indulgence in the evening, as he took good care never to forget himself in the day-time, men were willing to ignore a failing from which not a very large majority of the male sex in America were in those days entirely exempt.

I found him at his lodgings, as I expected, at one o'clock in the afternoon, then the usual dinner-time for the Bostonians, and just as he was about to proceed to a French restaurant where he usually took his meals.

He showed great eagerness to honour the Governor's credentials, assured me the sight and voice of a countryman was the greatest treat that fell to his lot in this land of the *Amari Cani* (a wretched pun for Americani), and coming to the point he wished me the fullest success in the teacher's business, informing me that there was already another Italian in Boston employed in the same capacity, but adding that there would be ample room for us all, "the more the merrier."

We thus walked and talked together as far as the door of his restaurant, where he muttered something about "the honour of my company;" but seeing in my face little disposition to accept a dinner invitation on so slight an acquaintance, he gave the sentence a different turn to what he had intended, and simply "craved the honour of my company at his poor lodgings between eight and nine in the evening, when he would ask the colleague and friend he had mentioned, by name Pietro d'Alessandro, like himself a native of Palermo, to meet me."

I accepted, and went again to Brattle Street punctually at eight, wishing to have a few minutes *tête-à-tête* with him before his other visitor dropped in. I found him seated at his writing-table, in the midst of many books, and having on his left hand

a sideboard on which were arranged half-a-dozen tumblers, with three decanters labelled "Rum," "Gin," and "Whisky," while a kettle of hot water was hissing on the hob of the chimney-grate near him.

He asked me "what I would take," in the regular Yankee fashion; and as to please him I was pouring only a few drops of whisky into my glass, he tilted up my elbow with a good-humoured smile, telling me, "I knew nothing of that bitter New England climate which, were it not for a drop of something warm inside, would soon be the death of me."

"Do not think me a sot," he added, a cloud of sadness momentarily darkening his brow; "I never drink more than is good for me—at least not while I am in good company. The mischief is, what is a man to do all by himself in the dull long hours of a New England winter evening?"

Poor man! And he already bore on his face the unmistakable traces of the ravages of that insidious enemy which was to cut him off at no distant period, still in the prime of life. Our tumblers being drained, we lighted our cigars, and proceeded to business. The first step to be taken, if I wished for employment as a teacher, my friend said, was to advertise.

"Advertise," I said, "as if I were a quack or a mountebank!"

"Advertise," he repeated. "Do you think we are in Italy? Merit with us likes to hide its candle under a bushel. Our proverb is, 'A buon vino non occorre frasca ;' but here men act upon our other adage: "In bocca chiusa non entran mosche." How do you expect people to come and buy of you, if they do not know you have something to sell."

Thus saying, he laid before me a paper on which he had written :

"A CARD !

"An Italian gentleman, a graduate of the University of Parma, highly qualified by his manifold accomplishments, and by a long practice of tuition, attends private pupils and classes at boys' schools, ladies' academies, etc. References: Hon. Edward Everett, Hon. Josiah Quincy, and Pietro Bachi, L.L.D., Italian instructor in Harvard University. Address: L. M., No. 110, Tremont House, Boston."

"That I call blowing my own trumpet," said I.

"Who do you expect will blow it for you?" he answered.

"Besides," I insisted, "Governor Everett? President

Quincy? How can I refer to these gentlemen before consulting them and asking their permission?"

"Oh! that is mere formality," he explained. "Nobody will ever trouble those gentlemen about you. Besides, have you not letters for them? Did not Mr. Everett already recommend you to me? It is the custom here, I tell you."

"But I have not even seen Mr. Quincy."

"But you will see him to-morrow. We will call upon him together at Cambridge," he concluded, cutting short the discussion; and ringing the bell, he gave the "card" to the maid-of-all-works, who answered the summons, bidding her take it to the editor of the *Boston Daily Courier*, adding his compliments and a couple of dollars of mine, paying for three insertions, and begging that the announcement should appear in his columns on the following morning.

That being despatched, he took upon himself the task of a jovial entertainer, and did it with that buoyancy and raciness of humour, with that flow of never-flagging spirits, with that mixture of wisdom and buffoonery, which make many of my countrymen the most amusing diners out—in male company. Half-an-hour later the other invited guest came in. He was a perfect contrast to the host—somewhat younger,

better looking, neater in dress, and more reserved in manner. He seemed suited to play the part of *Il Penseroso* in any comedy in which Bachi should personify *l'Allegro*. D'Alessandro had been in his own country a poet by trade—a romantic, tragic, and elegiac poet. But having been driven abroad as a political exile, he had hoped a broker's business might prove more profitable; and having obtained the *exequatur* as Vice-Consul of one of the South American Republics, he wasted at the Stock Exchange all the hours he could spare from his employment as a teacher of languages. That his hand, trained by the Muses, had not forgot its cunning, he however proved by the publication of a poem in Italian blank verse, entitled: “Monte Auburno”—a pathetic illustration of the Garden Cemetery of Boston, the pride of its citizens—and a poem cast in the mould of Foscolo’s classical work, “I Sepolcri,” and not without some slight reminiscences of Gray’s Elegy, but which obtained the honour of an English version, and made the author’s name deservedly popular.

In his private intercourse as in his literary effusions D’Alessandro was equally disposed to take the most dismal view of the things of this world. He was always in love and always hopeless; and as eloquent

in his praises of some of the New England beauties as Captain Ellis in his rambling declamations about "Bostin gals."

The ceremony of introduction having been performed, we sat, a happy trio, round the fire and made ourselves comfortable. Ninety-nine out of any hundred Italians you could meet at that period in their own country would be sure to be patriots, or, as the term then was, "Liberals." But out of their country they were all so, with hardly any exception. One might say of them, as Dante said of the Sardinians,

"Their country is a theme whereof their tongue
Is never weary."

D'Alessandro and I were "lambs strayed out of the sheepfold at feud with the wolves that ravaged it." Bachi was not, strictly speaking, a political exile. With him, we were told, there had been "a lady in the case"; but in our way of thinking we were perfectly unanimous, the only point at issue being whether our worst enemies were the Austrians or the French; our princes, or the Pope and his priests. Where the agreement was so nearly complete, conversation would soon necessarily have fallen flat; but we allowed it to ramble over a variety of subjects, we warmed it up

with desultory discussions, enlivened it with “quips, and cranks, and wanton wiles,” giving it now a grave, now a merry turn, and carrying it on with that noise, and warmth, and expression, of which the Italians alone seem capable, and even they only when they are among themselves.

For I may say, for my part, I have constantly observed that one of our people, however much his character may be modified by long domestication with men of alien race in all other respects, never fails to be the same man in his social intercourse with his own countrymen whenever and wherever he may be thrown together with them, and however temporarily; that he never fails to become one of them for the time being, having as much to say, and saying it with the same clamorous, passionate eagerness and volubility as he ever evinced at home in early youth. And I see it in my own case, after a long life of “threescore years and ten,” and an absence of half a century from the land of my birth; for while here in England I am voted a rather dull and “slow” companion, I hardly ever fall in with a knot of my country people without undergoing a complete transformation, and becoming at once what they call a “*Capo ameno*”; my eye flashing, my voice pitched to the highest key;

launching out through thick and thin, no matter on what topic; and so different from my usual tone and manner, that my own good English wife herself declares that she hardly recognised in the mercurial Italian that stands before her at those moments the slightest resemblance to the half-naturalised Englishman, to whose silent, absent, and rather humdrum manner she had been accustoming herself for above a score of years.

And rarely were my spirits more elate than they were during the few hours of that evening entertainment in Brattle Street, my liveliness arising partly from natural relief after the seven or eight weeks' gloom of my recent navigation, partly from the fact that I was the latest arrival from the Old World, and had most to say about its newest occurrences; so that on me necessarily fell the brunt of the conversation, and I could hardly help being carried away by the vastness and variety of my theme.

I can hardly remember ever having spent a more agreeable evening, ever having better enjoyed the luxury of hearing my own voice, ever having more thoroughly forgotten myself and my troubles.

It was only when we took leave long after midnight, and when having walked with D'Alessandro part of the way towards his lodgings, I retraced my steps across

the moonlit Boston Park, or “common,” to my hotel, that a reaction, and a collapse of my exuberant spirits set in, and the thought of the utter precariousness of my situation assailed me.

I was all alone in my fight against that strange world, and with no other means to carry on the war than the paltry sixteen dollars with which I had arrived in Boston, some of which had, that very evening, managed to make themselves wings. And, after all, with what prospects? *Toujours Marchand de Participes!* Was it still only to be a teacher that I had all but quarrelled with my best friends, and turned my back upon a home where I had so long been living in clover?

CHAPTER IV.

A STUMBLE ON THE THRESHOLD.

A pupil and friend—A Boston boarding-house—A dainty widow—An American college—A fine old gentleman—Early rising and cold bathing—American women—Fascination—Destitution—An unfriendly yet salutary warning—A critical situation—A Job's comforter—A Good Samaritan—A begging adventure—Boston to Charlestown.

THE following morning rose under better auspices. Before the day was old, I had found a friend.

I was seated in my room, No. 110, Tremont House, after breakfast, spelling out my own advertisement in the still damp sheet of the *Boston Daily Courier*, when a visitor was announced, and his card,

MR. CHARLES B. MILNER.

was laid before me.

He was a gentlemanly youth, apparently not more than twenty-two years old, with a frank, open

countenance, unembarrassed and prepossessing manners, who, after shaking hands and taking the proffered chair, pointed to the newspaper on my table, and told me he had just read my "Card" the first thing as he got up, and had lost no time in finding me out, as he was anxious to become my pupil; and he wished, if I was disengaged, and so inclined, to take his first lesson that very morning.

He had, he proceeded to inform me, just finished his studies at Harvard College, and was about to be received as a junior partner in his uncle's, James K. Milner's, business in Union Street, and he was aware that Latin and Greek would be of little avail in his commercial career, and what he required was some acquaintance with modern languages. What he especially needed was French, as the universal means of communication between the European nations; and Spanish, because his uncle's trade was with the Antilles and the South American Republics; but he preferred to begin with Italian, as he knew its idioms came nearest to Latin, and must therefore be easiest to one who, like himself, had made the most of his learning at the Grammar School.

I had no books with me, but took pen, ink, and paper, and made him spell out a few words, and repeat

two or three stanzas of Tasso's "Jerusalem," which I knew by heart, enabling him thus, with little effort, to get over the few difficulties of Italian pronunciation.

The lesson was easy, but it lasted an unconscionable time, because I had to do with a lively, ingenuous pupil, who flew off at a tangent from the matter before him, brought in endless extraneous subjects, asked questions, and volunteered information, so that before we had done we had become as thoroughly acquainted with each other's affairs as if we had been on the most intimate terms for years.

His uncle, he told me, was a wealthy West India merchant. He was a married man ; but had no children and no other near relations than himself, Charles, and his two sisters, one of whom, Sarah, was the wife of Professor Percy, a mathematician of high renown, and the other, Harriet, still unmarried, who lived with her sister in Cambridge.

Presently one o'clock struck and the gong announced the hotel dinner. My pupil rose immediately, begged me to stand on no ceremony ; added that he was a bachelor and lived by himself in lodgings in Summer Street, but that he took his meals at hotels and restaurants wherever he chanced to be, that "The Tremont" would do as well as any other, and that

he should be happy if I would allow him to sit at table besides me and be one of the landlord's guests.

Dinner being over, we walked out together into Washington Street; stopped at Ticknor's book store to buy grammars and dictionaries for my pupil's studies and, as I had shown some distaste for the crowd and hubbub of hotel life, and agreed with him that what best might suit me was a private boarding-house in the American fashion, we proceeded to Pearl Street, where he offered to introduce me to Miss Lekain, who, he told me, kept one of the best establishments of that description in the city.

Miss Lekain was a shrivelled but still active old lady, dressed in what people would now call "loud" colours, and wearing a golden wig that allowed no more of her natural hair to be seen than that of the *Grand Roi Louis Quatorze* by the time he was great-grandfather. We found her seated in her drawing-room with a young lady in deep mourning, who was rocking herself in her chair with a book in her hand held up to her face, and who took no notice of us. This lady, Miss Lekain told us, as she showed me the room she had at my disposal, was Mrs. Dana (she pronounced Deney), the widow of a naval officer, and one of the loveliest women she had ever had in her house.

The terms with the landlady being settled, my friend, young Milner, left me at my hotel door, allowing me time to pack up my things, discharge my bill, and transfer myself to my new lodgings in Pearl Street, when in about half-an-hour he called again in his uncle's gig, offering to drive me out to Cambridge, where I should make the acquaintance of his sisters and of some of his fellow-students and friends.

We had a delightful afternoon. Cambridge is only three miles out of Boston across the River Charles; a very small town at the time, with a few narrow streets all clustering together, and a number of detached or semi-detached houses round a common, in the centre of which rose two huge barrack-like buildings, constituting the main body of Harvard University. On the north side of the common stretched a line of white houses and gardens, bearing the name of Professors' Row, and at its end was the entrance to wooded grounds of some park-like pretension, embosomed in which was the residence of Mr. Andrews Norton, a retired Professor of Divinity.

All the houses, the University buildings, with their hall, chapel, museums, library, and observatory, were of wood, and called shingle houses, as were still many

of the edifices, both public and private, in the City of Boston itself.

As we drove into, and presently walked about, the College grounds, we met a crowd of youths, many of whom my friend pointed out, telling me their names, and to some of whom he stopped to introduce me. These were graduates, now staying at [the College as tutors, lecturers, or proctors ; some of them apparently too young for the office of professors, which they already filled with distinction.

We did not fall in with Longfellow on that day, but went past Cragie House, a famous spot, already well known for some of its former tenants—General Washington, for one; and a fine mansion, with a lawn in front, shaded by magnificent New England elms with long drooping branches ; a place one could hardly pass without feeling he was treading on hallowed ground.

We then called at one of the houses in Professors' Row, where we took tea with Milner's sisters ; Mrs. Percy, the professor's wife, a full-blown, but youthful, lively, and elegant beauty, and her maiden sister, slender, dark-haired, gray-eyed, with a pink complexion, and shy, shrinking manners, a timidity which wore off on a closer acquaintance and made room for just

a little pertness and sharpness not without its peculiar charm.

But my business, and indeed my duty, on coming to Cambridge, was to call upon the Honourable Josiah Quincy, the President of Harvard College. College or University, as it was indifferently called ; the former and more modest designation being generally used at the time of my first visit, the latter becoming the more usual appellation since.

Mr. Quincy was a remarkably handsome man, between sixty and seventy, tall and erect, with eyes still bright, smooth silver hair, and a florid complexion ; as hale and vigorous as a fox-hunting English squire, "all of the olden times," of that race from which he lineally descended—the Quincies, the Adams, and the Quincy-Adams being known as an offshoot of the earliest settlers in these New England plantations.

Mr. Quincy had never been much of a student ; but he had been conspicuous as a member of the Massachusetts Legislature and of the Boston Municipal Council, a *pater patriæ*, for many years mayor of the city which he had embellished with a magnificent market-house, a granite building, 500 feet long and 38 feet wide, still bearing his name.

It was owing to these constructive and adminis-

trative abilities that he had been elected president of the college; for the institution had fallen into some disorganisation under his predecessor—a good-natured divine and scholar, utterly deficient in energy—and a new ruler was required to bring the riotous spirits of some of the students under control. Mr. Quincy had acquitted himself of this new task with full success. He had governed with a steady, but by no means a heavy hand; the feelings he inspired as a disciplinarian being fear at first, then respect, and finally veneration and affection.

Mr. Bach had already mentioned my name to him, and he received me with frank cordiality, without even opening the letter of introduction which I handed to him. He was sorry, he said, he had no vacant place in the college to offer me, as I had been made to expect; sorry he could not avail himself of my services in a public capacity; but any assistance I might need here in Cambridge, or in Boston, or wherever his name was known—

Here he broke off, interrupted by a slight attack of cough; then he resumed: "How do you like America?" And he went on without awaiting my answer: "You will like it, I am sure. A great country, sir! Room for everybody here! All comes

in time to him who can afford to wait. All I can advise you, sir, is to be patient, and just feel your way."

These were almost word for word the very expressions Mr. Everett had used. They were apparently the stereotyped phrases with which a stranger in want of employment was usually encouraged in the United States.

"Bide my time? Feel my way?" I reflected, as, having taken leave of the kind old gentleman, I rejoined my friend who was waiting for me in his gig. "That would be very well if my poor fourteen dollars were not so rapidly making themselves wings."

As we were driving back to town towards evening, and I gave my friend an account of my interview with the president, I could not help expressing my admiration of the look of health and strength exhibited by that wonderful septuagenarian.

"Ay, ay," said Milner; "a green old age. That is the way men wear under the influence of what are called our withering east winds. You could not muster anything like that in the soft airs of your sweet South, could you now? Have you many in Italy that come to a hundred, as that old buffer is sure to do?"

He did not wait for an answer, but went on his own way:

"I just wish you had asked old Quincy how he managed to be so tough at his time of life—' You are old, Father William,' and all that follows; you know Southey's poem. Would you believe it? I asked him myself once, when I was here a freshman, and what do you think he answered? 'It is early rising and cold bathing has done it all, sir.' And, do you know, I have taken to early rising and cold bathing myself, and kept to it ever since. And, do you know, I think I shall be like that when I'm eighty."

Thus did my friend rattle on like a man who had never been, and never could be, ruffled by the storms of life. His quaint manner, his high spirits amused me.

"Eighty!" I said, falling into my usual heroic mood.
"And to think that I shall never see thirty!"

He pulled up his horse sharp, and turned to look at me.

"Not thirty? dear me! A disease of the heart?" he asked.

"No disease in the world," I said; "but all men do not die in a sick bed. It may be only a fancy, but I feel I am not intended for a long life. All the same, however, I rejoice in my never-failing health, and take good care of it. I am always up with the

lark, and I will henceforth try the effect of a cold dip in the morning."

And I made up my mind then and there; and that was the greatest gain I made out of that afternoon drive. Cold bathing was not so common a practice with our fathers as it has become with us; but I adopted it at once and never relinquished it.

We spent the evening at the Athenæum, a literary institution, where Milner's uncle, at my friend's request, had already entered my name; and when at last we shook hands at Miss Lekain's door in Pearl Street, I wondered whether so devoted, so useful, and so charming a friend could have been so easily won, in only one day's intercourse, in the Old World.

In the morning, at Miss Lekain's, breakfast was laid out at nine. The aged spinster sat in the place of honour at the head of a long table near the fire, before a row of coffee and tea-pots, milk-jugs, and sugar-bowls, ministering to her guests' wants. There were about half-a-score of them, all apparently in a hurry to be off, seated round the table, helping themselves to the ham and eggs, cutlets and other viands, hot or cold, with which the board was spread, and passing round from one to another the cups as they came from the landlady's hands. The guests were

mostly young men employed in trade, and were away all day at their business, hardly any of them appearing at the two o'clock dinner, and preferring a hasty snack at the cook and confectioner's on weekdays. The ladies boarding at the house had their breakfasts in their own apartments. Only on the Sunday, or "Sabbath Day," as they preferred to call it, the whole set took their meals together like a well-behaved happy family.

Miss Lekain had evidently told all she knew or imagined about me as she announced the latest addition to the roll of her guests; for they all looked up from their plates, and took a good stare at the *Eye-talian* or *Signio'*, as I entered and sat down at the end of the table near the door. There were a few words of awkward silence till the landlady addressed me as she had done all present, with the momentous question, "tea, coffee, or cocoa?" All my fellow-boarders, however, came up to me as they rose to go out, and all shook hands with kind words of welcome which I did not well understand. Presently, I remained alone with the landlady, who, after diligently attending to my requirements, left me also with many most unnecessary apologies, and pleading the manifold cares of her crowded household. I stepped up to one of the three

balconies opening out into the quiet street in front of the house, threw myself into a large arm-chair, the only one in the room that was not rocking, and took a leisurely survey of the outer world. There was a chill drizzling rain; hardly a soul stirring; nothing to tempt a man out of doors. I took up the *Daily Courier*, and made some effort to spell out the news.

Presently the door opened. A parlour-maid with a large tray came in to clear the table, and after her entered a lady with her cloak and bonnet on, apparently bent on going out. She cast a hurried glance around the room as if looking for somebody, then stepped up to the balcony farthest from the one I sat at, but after a look at the weather she evidently changed her mind about her movements, for she took off her bonnet and cloak and handed them to the maid, who having by this time accomplished her task, took herself and those garments off, leaving us *tête-à-tête*.

I had risen as the lady appeared and made a slight bow, of which no notice was taken. The lady went up to a shelf, took down a book, and, seating herself near the fire, was soon reading and rocking.

The book was apparently not entertaining, for she soon looked up, stood up, and walked uneasily round the table, looking for something.

"The newspaper?" I cried, guessing her mind, and as I spoke I jumped up, walked across the room and stood before her tendering the broad sheet. She thanked me with a slight bow. I looked at her. I recognised the fine elegant figure of the lady I had found the previous day seated with Miss Lekain, when I called with young Milner, and when no sight of her face was vouchsafed to us. She was the lovely widow, Mrs. Dana!

She had on a black silk morning dress, just open enough in front to allow the tiniest peep into the most dazzling neck and throat my eyes had ever beheld. She was not above three or four-and-twenty years of age, somewhat undersized, but faultless in form, and with features which the transcendent charm of that soft creamy complexion hardly allowed one to analyse.

"You understand English, then?" she said. "I fancied—we were told you were French—an Eyetalian?" she said.

"The latter," said I.

"Dear me! from Italy? Only to think! That's very far; farther than Holland, I reckon. Did you not like Italy? And do you like America better? Do tell?"

Her questions came thick and fast, and would have

embarrassed me even if I had not been struck dumb, spellbound by her bright face, and at a loss how to express myself in the only language she probably could understand.

"May I," I ventured to ask, "address you in French, or Italian, or——?"

She smiled, the coral lips opened, out flashed the pearly teeth.

"No parleyvous for me," she answered; "no, no!"

The reader must not imagine that I had been very ready with my English even in my intercourse with Mr. Everett, Mr. Quincy, or young Milner, educated men though they were, who spoke slowly and deliberately, shaping their sentences in that manner, and giving them those turns which they thought could best convey their meaning to one who knew only as much of English as book-learning could impart. With illiterate persons, as those only conversant with one language may in our days be called, as with mere children, the beginning is much harder; but when you perceive that they have only one word for an idea, when they insist on screaming out that word till they think they have overcome your deafness, somehow you get on better; in this, as in any other study necessity being after all the best mistress. It was not much more than a year before I had picked

up a little Spanish out of the mouth of Amalia and Pepita Viale, the piquant daughters of a Genoese merchant married at Gibraltar. The sweet lips and teeth of this Yankee widow did almost as much for my English at this juncture.

She bade me take the newspaper and read out a paragraph aloud; then she took the paper, read the paragraph, and made me repeat it word by word before her. Then she thought we should read poetry. She looked for some book of verse in Miss Lekain's shelf; but finding none, she bade me follow her, took me into a little back drawing-room reserved for her use as a private boudoir, read me and made me read Bryant's "Lines to a Water-fowl":

"Whither, 'midst falling dew,'"

Campbell's "Lord Ullin's daughter":

"A chieftain to the Highlands bound."

She sang Moore's melody:

"She is far from the land where her young hero sleeps;"

she bade me sing some of Norma's airs in return, then to tell her something about the Pope of Rome, whom I did not tell her I had never seen, of the beauty of the European ladies, the costume about Swiss and

Neapolitan peasant women, about all I had most admired here and there in my travels, regretting that I had nothing to tell her about the Hague and Amsterdam, places about which she seemed particularly curious.

Heavens ! How we got on together ! how swiftly flew the hours of that morning, and even more pleasantly than those I had spent on the previous day with Charles Milner ! Here had I been only three days in Boston ; the second day had vouchsafed me a friend ; the third—this bewitching widow !

It should be borne in mind that I had throughout the fifty days of my dreary sea-voyage been denied all intercourse with the fair sex, and that I knew absolutely nothing of the nature and fashion of American women. Women in the States were then, and are still more now, absolute mistresses of their own world and of themselves. Safe in their perfect control over their senses and temperament, they consider themselves free to indulge their fancy, to challenge men's admiration, to flirt *& outrage*. Brought up in seminaries and academies usually conducted by male instructors, they learn from very infancy how to feel and exercise their powers of fascination. Grown up, they live as queens of their household, or club together at some hotel or boarding-house ; but little of

the domestic drudgery falling to the lot of most of them. They are great readers at home, great talkers abroad ; idle most of the day, with heads stuffed with romance and poetry, studying all the airs and graces, all the most captivating accomplishments ; sharpening and polishing their weapons for the onslaught, though often greatly at a loss for the “natural enemy” against whom they are to be turned ; for men—ladies’ men—are terribly scarce in America, where husbands and fathers, brothers and cousins, mostly business men, are off early in the morning after an early breakfast, only to be back in the evening for a late dinner or supper ; and they come home worn out with work, debased by greed, unfitted for ladies’ company by want of congenial education and polish, of sympathy with female pursuits, or appreciation of female talents and graces.

Hence it is that a male visitor, a man free from engagements and with indefinite time at his disposal, willing to devote himself to women, to humour them, to take some interest in their not very serious or heavy occupations, is looked upon as a godsend in all American households. It may be the clergyman at rest for six days in the week, it may be the doctor tarrying for a chat after his professional visit. But the most welcome is a stranger, any stranger, especially

one fresh from across seas, a man better or worse, but at any rate different from the ordinary run of their daily associates, a man striking their eye by the cut of his coat, by the wearing of his beard, by the very quaintness and oddity of his broken English, a man of alien tongue and outlandish manners, a Frenchman, or any other of the Latin race.

It was as a European and an Eyetalian that Mrs. Dana marked me the first day she saw me, and now came to seek me out, to dazzle me, to enslave me, to have her quarter-of-an-hour's amusement at my expense. She rose that morning probably bent on mischief; she must have her day's sport, and it little mattered whether it was a ten-pound salmon, pike or carp, or merely a gudgeon or minnow that came to her net.

What defence had I against her? I was beset by gloomy thoughts, distracted by anxiety about my difficult, my dangerous position. My purse so nearly empty stared me in the face. Here was balm to soothe the wounds of adversity; here was a haven, however temporary, for shelter against life's storms. There is no one so prone to fall in love as your penniless man. It may be true that "when poverty comes in at the door, love flies off at the window;" but that is only

after marriage. We were now in mid-October; the rainy season had set in. Morning after morning, evening after evening, we were thrown together, always together, frequently all to ourselves. There was no escape. A chain of irresistible circumstances conspired to entrap me. I might say with Petrarch :

“ What wonder, with a heart as soft as tinder,
If I was instantly burnt to a cinder ! ”*

I must confess, moreover, that there was something by no means unpleasant in that roasting process. And for what concerns myself, I could flatter myself that there was work as well as pleasure in it. We had to sit very close as we held the same book between us with both hands; all the closer as we happened to be both near-sighted. An occasional, involuntary, almost imperceptible contact with her elbow or her knee; the brushing of her ringlets against my face; the inhaling of her sweet, warm breath, were inevitable occurrences.

There was ecstasy of the senses, but there was also improvement to the mind, as I watched the movements of her lips and the expression of her eyes, to catch

* A somewhat free translation of those magnificent lines:

“ Io che l’ esca amorosa al petto avea,
Qual maraviglia se di subit’ arsi ! ”

the peculiar lisp of the “th,” the hissing of the “sh,” the stronger or softer aspiration of the “h.”

There was sorcery in the smile of approbation and encouragement with which any show of aptness and intelligence on my part was rewarded, and there was almost as great a charm in the slight frown with which my dulness or slowness of apprehension was occasionally visited. But, combined with all that, there was the consciousness that I was making wonderfully rapid progress in my English; a progress arising from a tension of the mental faculties commensurate with the strain of the overwrought nerves. The widow was in a double sense my mistress. A charmer and a teacher. She was twice a goddess; any emotion caused by her allurements as a Venus was chastened by her gentle but firm discipline as a Minerva.

The fascination might nevertheless have turned out dangerous in the long run. But there were too many circumstances conspiring to put an end to it. The very *Dea ex Machina* that first broke the spell was no other person than Miss Lekain, my golden-wigged landlady. She had sent me up her account for the first week as was her wont. I went down to the office on the ground-floor with her bill in my hand with an intended request for a postponement of its

settlement, to which she made no objection. Indeed, she received me most graciously. She congratulated me on my rapid proficiency as a learner of English. She gave full credit to the ability and zeal of my instructress. She lavished high praises on the personal attractions of my enchantress. She looked at me with a knowing leer conveying all the taunt addressed by the ghostly chair to Tom Smart in the Bagman's story, in "Pickwick." "The widow's a fine woman—eh, Tom?" and "You are *very* poor, Tom." She perceived, she said, that I was greatly smitten with the charms of her fair boarder. She regretted to see me so keen after her, so intimate with her. That, she might as well tell me, could lead to no good. Mrs. Dana was not for me. Mrs. Dana was no longer her own mistress. She was betrothed to Mr. Notteboom, a great, rich, Dutch merchant. They had met at Nahant last summer. Mr. Notteboom had left three months ago for Amsterdam to get everything ready in his house for the reception of its future mistress. Mr. Notteboom was on his way back now. He was already in New York winding up affairs there previous to his final retirement from business. In two or three days he would be here in Boston, in Pearl Street, in this house, and the wedding would come off on Thursday next.

She perceived that her words were taking away my breath. Presently she softened her tone, approached me with a more benevolent expression, and laid a hand on my arm.

"I feel for you, signio," she said. "I think you have been unfairly dealt with. It is too bad of the young women of our time. Widows, above all things. They ought to know better. But what can I say? We are not in the Mormon country. A woman in America may only marry one man; and I am sure she ought not to love two."

I protested that there had never been one word of love or marriage between me and the widow, which was strict, sober truth, whereupon she spoke out her mind.

"I am glad to hear you say so. What I must tell you now will give you less pain. You see, signio', Mr. Notteboom will be here in two or three days. He is a queer, peppery, elderly gentleman. He might be told—he might suspect. There might be the — to pay in the house."

"I do not care a rush for Mr. Notteboom!"

"Ah! but I do, and so does Mrs. Dana. You are too kind, too considerate, signio', to wish to compromise her and to ruin me."

"The long and the short of it, Miss Lekain," I

said with some warmth, "is, that you want to turn me out of your house."

"Pardon me, signio'," she answered, "I said no such thing. It was your own good sense and good feeling that prompted the expediency of such a step. You surely cannot wish to stay here and see your lovely widow snapped up before your very eyes by that snuffy old Dutchman!"

"The widow is nothing to me, I told you, Miss Lekain," I said, with a great gulp at my throat. "I can always go back to 'The Tremont'; only, you see—I told you, your bill——"

"Let that be no hindrance, signio'; it's a mere trifle," she cried out eagerly. And she added in what the poor deaf old body meant for an aside: "We shall be well rid of you at that price."

But I heard her and flamed up in my wrath. "You think I intend to swindle you?" I cried. "Do you take me for a Yankee? Here—your bill is sixteen dollars, fifty cents. Here are two gold eagles!" (ten dollars) throwing the coin on the table. I can give you a note of hand for the balance. You shall have your money to the last cent."

With this I rushed from the room, the rickety glass door closing after me with a bang.

I walked about for half-an-hour in Washington Street, jostling, but hardly seeing the crowd, before my blood began to cool. Presently the thought of the awkwardness of my predicament resumed its ascendancy over my mind. What was to be done now? Here I was! I had parted with my very last dollar, and was even in debt. I had barely fifty cents to pay the street-porter who should take back my luggage to the hotel. "The hotel!" I thought, as I walked towards it; "how could I think of running up a new bill there?" I went to the door, as I had done every day for the last week, to ask if any one had inquired for "L. M." in answer to my advertisement. The advertisement had appeared three times, and the address, 110, Tremont House, had not been altered. But no one had taken notice of it. Mr. Charles B. Milner was the first and last pupil the announcement had brought me. Even this, my best and only friend, seemed to have forsaken me. I had not seen him for a week, nor had I, in my infatuation about the widow, found one moment to call upon him. Day after day the good young man had written, appointing the time for his second lesson; but the note had invariably been followed by another, apologising for the broken engagement, and explaining that

s' they were overwhelmed with business at his uncle's counting-house, and he had not one minute at his disposal. To the counting-house I went. I found my friend deep in his ledgers, but he got up, seized my hand with his usual warmth, and said : "I was just going to see you."

Then he hurried me into an inner room, where we found both his uncle and aunt. He went through a hurried form of introduction, presenting me as the Italian master and friend "about whom he had said so much," and who was now to be *their* friend in his absence.

He then turned to me, and informed me that he was to sail that very evening for Havannah, where his uncle's business required looking after, and he hardly could hope to be back before the end of the year. Business was so pressing that he had not even been at leisure to go out to take leave of his aunt at Brooklyn, and she had to be driven to town to bid him good-bye.

That was my luck! I bade him good-bye in my turn, and parted with him at the counting-house door, just stopping one moment, and wondering in my distress whether I should remind him of the little he owed me for the only lesson he had taken ; for the veriest trifle might have been a help to me at that juncture. But

the extremity itself of my need made me bashful ; and I must say that from the beginning to the end of my career as a teacher, it was always not the lesson but the fee that revolted me. My pupils could hardly give me a harder slap in the face than by asking for my "terms," or calling for my "bill"—a silly pride of which the majority never cared to take notice, or scrupled to wound ; but which a few delicate persons, especially ladies, guessed, and managed to humour and to honour.

My repugnance to enter into any conversation on such subjects was invincible, even under present gloomy circumstances, and as my friend, I thought, chose to make no sign, it was not for me to give him a hint that might sound like a reproach.

My poor friend, however, had forgotten nothing, omitted nothing, and was only anxious to spare my feelings, of which his own good instinct had made him aware. For he had already laid in his uncle's hand a letter for me enclosing a ten-dollar note, intending to acquit himself of what he owed, not only for the one lesson he had received, but also for those he had bespoken and missed. But it chanced that the letter was overlooked and allowed to lay on his uncle's table for three days, at the end of which it was sent

to my address in Pearl Street, when I had already left that house, and whence it reached me after a further delay—reached me, still welcome, but not the same present help in trouble it would have been, had it come in the nick of time.

With a harassed mind, and an empty purse, cold and hungry, I rambled from street to street; sat idly on a green bench under the elms of the common, counting the hours as the clock struck them from the turret of the State House, looking wistfully to the right and left, as if I waited for an appointment, or expected somebody or something to turn up, and all because I was loath to go back to Pearl Street, where I might have to confront Miss Lekain or my artful widow.

My passion for the widow, if it indeed was love, oozed at my fingers' ends, or was turned to a kind of resentful feeling. I was angry with her for the folly which had made me waste in my dalliance about her a precious time that would have been better employed in a struggle for my daily bread. "Had it not been for that witch of a widow," I said, "I should not now be at the mercy of that hag of a landlady."

My landlady! Six dollars! Where were they to come from? A paltry sum, forsooth! but how

colossal it looms before the imagination of a man with never a cent in his pocket! I had never known what it was to be in debt. To beg or to borrow seemed to me not much less criminal than to steal. That Miss Lekain had made light of my debt, that she had expressed so much readiness to waive her claim, was what most bitterly grated upon my feelings. Leave her house without settling her bill! Rather blow out my brains on her threshold!

In this tragic mood my hours passed. What a day it was! I wandered and sat, sat and wandered, past the dinner-hour, past the glow of sunset. At last I loathed my own company. Was there nowhere a man to help me? My countryman? Pietro Bachi? Alas, not he!

I had often seen Pietro Bachi, always at his house, and always in the evening; for that was the only time my fatal widow denied herself to me, closeting herself with her milliner or mantua-maker, with whom she had daily consultations; a proceeding which was to me a mystery till Miss Lekain spoke out, when, of course, I understood that the widow was employed in getting ready her wedding and travelling garments.

In any hour of leisure I was glad enough to see my countryman; but I had seen enough of him to

look upon him as only a fair-weather friend; and, as the glass for me now stood at "stormy," it was not without a heavy heart that, at dusk, I turned my steps to Brattle Street.

He received me in his usual friendly, but cool, cynical manner, offering me his never-failing bumper of hot punch, and looking at me as I sipped it, as if under the impression that I meditated an attack and it behoved him to stand on his defence. I had repeatedly thrown out clear hints to him as to the terrible difficulties that encompassed me, but he had invariably, with great adroitness, parried off any appeal I might venture upon, and given me clearly to understand that I could expect no assistance from him. All this seemed very hard to me at the time. But I have learnt what the world is since, and I am now convinced, as he probably was, that beggary grows upon what it feeds upon; that a man who sinks so low as to borrow is like a horse that has once fallen on his knees—never safe from new and more disastrous tumbles; and that the best, the only way to save a man—a true man—is to leave him to save himself.

This was stern but wholesome doctrine. And I had often read it in Bach's face much more clearly than I had heard it from his mouth.

"My dear friend," he said to me; "my dear Mariotti, I have spoken out to you from the beginning. My principle is, 'Everybody for himself and God for us all.' There is room in this Boston, in this Yankee Athens, for more than three Italian masters. But, for myself, I must say I do not receive more applications for my services than I am fully able and extremely glad to attend to, and even if I had any lessons to spare, I should be under a sacred obligation to give them to our friend D'Alessandro, on the principle 'first come, first served.'"

All this with respect to any hint I threw out as to any help in the way of business. As to any aid of a more delicate nature I had never breathed a word, yet he had already repeatedly volunteered his information that his experience of the wickedness of the world had always been so disheartening that he had registered a solemn vow in Heaven, in obedience to which he could "Neither a borrower nor a lender be." It was therefore not with any hope of obtaining relief or sympathy that I came to him on that evening. It was merely to give vent to my pent-up feelings, and no sooner had I laid down my tumbler than I ventured on a full exposition of the sea of troubles which made my position desperate, and asked, as if advice could

avail, "What shall I do?" "Go to the D——l!" he would have said; but he was too polite for such words. He was moved in spite of himself nevertheless, and I even fancied I saw something like moisture between his eyelids, but he soon mastered his emotion, if he indeed felt any, and looked stern and cold and angry with himself as well as with me; as if my appeal, after all he had said, had taken him by surprise, and was by him considered an unwarrantable liberty, an abuse of hospitality.

"Very hard!" he said. "Very dreadful! But with what other expectations did you come to this country? Surely it was not to me—not to a man whose existence you did not even suspect—that you looked for aid in your troubles? Your friends in America should be the Americans themselves. Why do you not try Mr. Everett?"

It is true, I had forgotten His Excellency! What had I not forgotten under the influence of that buxom sorceress, my Pearl Street widow? But I did not choose to take Pietro Bachi into my confidence on the subject of that silly romance, and merely answered that Mr. Everett's manner, though consummately kind, was so icy and distant, that I had not dared to trouble him again with my presence.

"Mr. Everett cold! Mr. Everett haughty or indifferent!" he exclaimed. "That is all you know him. Is it because he does not wear his heart on his sleeve? Is it because he does not hug you in his arms like a Neapolitan? You must take men as they are. Reserve is the main feature of the English character; and an American, if a polished man, if a gentleman, is as stiff in his behaviour as an Englishman and a half. By all means go to Mr. Everett. Go to him immediately; to-morrow morning early. Do not go to him as if you dreaded or mistrusted him. Be frank with him; rely on him with perfect confidence. There is not one man in the world with readier sympathies or more generous impulses than Edward Everett. Go to him, and then let me see you again and hear what you think of him."

Having said this, he laid hold of a volume of Dante lying on his table, and reopened a discussion we had had on the four stars of the Southern Cross, which the poet describes as having seen on the shores of Purgatory at the Antipodes—a discussion which had arisen between us a few evenings before, but which, in my present state of mind, made me wish to see both Dante and all his commentators in that warm but not hopeless region the poet has so forcibly evolved from

his imagination. It was fortunate that in the heat of debate we were joined by D'Alessandro, who came in as my auxiliary, and carried on the controversy, leaving me to my thoughts of the morrow which were Purgatory enough for me.

I left my friends, still warm at their dispute, at midnight, and on reaching my home in Pearl Street, I let myself in with my latchkey, threw myself on my bed, and only rose, unrefreshed, after the ordinary guest's breakfast, when I again stole out of the house without falling in with any of the inmates. I then lost no time, but went over to Charlestown, and had the good fortune to catch Governor Everett, as he was about to step into his modest carriage to proceed to the State House. He looked at me for a moment, and was evidently struck with my pale and haggard face; but he asked me to take the place near him on the front seat, and talked pleasantly about subjects connected with his city and state business, and it was only as he alighted at the door of his official residence, that, under pretext of showing me the building, he invited me to go up with him, led the way into his private office, and when we were both seated, he opened the conversation with the question: "Well, Mr. Mariotti, and how have you been getting on?"

I told him in a few words how the waters of adversity had gone over my head ; how I had followed his advice to "bide my time and feel my way," but wound up with saying, "While the grass grew the steed was starving."

He listened to me patiently, with his large prominent eyes fixed on mine. But somehow, though my face is plain, I think it struck him, as it strikes many others, as that of a truth-telling man. He seized my hand and pressed it, and held it for a few minutes while he was thinking, and when at last he released it, he said : "We must keep the steed alive."

And he went on adding that no means for the moment occurred to him by which he could help me unless he gave me temporary employment in his own house. He had two daughters, he explained, whom he had for his own amusement given the rudiments of Latin, French, and Italian. These he offered me as pupils, warning me that I should have a good deal of work, and that he could not afford a very liberal remuneration. As I would have to give three hours of my time daily at his house, he thought it desirable for me to move my quarters to Charlestown, where it would be easy to find bed and board on easier terms than those I paid in Pearl Street.

"If," he concluded, "you will be so good as to call for me here at four o'clock in the afternoon, when I drive home, I will take you myself to Mrs. Hodge's, a worthy woman who keeps a boarding-house for medical students, where I shall leave you at liberty to make your own arrangements. It is to-day Friday; you may leave Miss Lekain's to-day or to-morrow; the lessons with my daughters may begin on Monday at ten."

Thus I had at once turned the corner. The blackest cloud had vanished, and fair weather promised to set in. Of actual starvation there was no longer a question. But, alas! There still remained to tide over the three days that separated us from the first working day of next week.

I went again in the evening of the same day to Brattle Street to convey my glad tidings to my friend Bach. He seemed overjoyed by the news; but when he heard that there were still rocks ahead—the six dollars fifty cents due to Miss Lekain—he made a long face, and his brow darkened, his expression conveying as clearly as any words could have done his settled mind, "never a borrower nor a lender be."

He regained his usual serenity of countenance, however, and tried to pooh-pooh the whole thing.

"Why, what folly!" he said. "So much fuss for a paltry six dollars? Miss Lekain will wait, to be sure."

But I explained that there had been high words between me and my landlady; that the woman had been insolent, and that I would not leave her house without acquitting myself to the last cent.

"But if I speak to her myself," he suggested.

"Not for the world," I said. "The woman must be paid, and at once. But I thought that you—Think of it, Bachi: it is a mere trifle of six—at the utmost of eight or ten dollars, to tide over these few days till Mr. Everett——"

"By-the-way," he interrupted, "why do you not speak out to Mr. Everett? Why, man, go back to him; make a clean breast to him; tell him your perplexities, and ask for prepayment of the first month's tuition."

"I have not thought of it, my friend. No, I could not think of it. It is only for a month, and at the end of it, I give you my word of honour——"

He threw up his head and whistled. Then he spoke: "Let me look at your watch." I handed it to him. It was a poor old silver article on which the most liberal Jew would never have advanced fifty cents.

He turned it over, in and out, and then he looked up with a brightened face as if a happy thought had just struck him.

“What a fool I was not to have thought of it all this time. The priests! The priests! Why should you not apply to the priests at the Oratory?”

And he exclaimed that the Roman Catholic Bishop of Boston had a fund entrusted to him for the relief of those of his flock who might chance to be in distress, and that he had in many instances paid the passage-money for immigrants who had found America not quite the Eldorado their imagination had depicted, and who might wish to go back to the country they came from.

“To the priests?” I exclaimed, resenting the suggestion as the greatest indignity.

“To the priests!” he insisted. “Wherefore not? Are you not a Catholic? Not a better one than I am, I daresay; but still you belong to the community. The money they dispose of is not theirs. It is not the Church, but the State, the laity that supplies it. The clergy are only the stewards.”

“But you forget,” I said, “that only five years ago I was up in arms against both Church and State as they now exist in Italy. In the eyes of the State

I am a rebel, and the Church drives me out as a reprobate."

"All the better, my friend. *Autant de pris sur l'ennemi.* Besides, these are American priests, not like ours, and they have longer purses than the Pope himself. Of course, you may do as you like. But, in your place, even priest's money would not stink in my nostrils. Consider, my friend," he added, getting up from his chair, stepping up to me, and taking my hand with an expression of genuine benevolence. "Your fortunes are now mending. The battle is more than half won. Mr. Everett is the silver lining to the cloud that was darkening your prospects. Go and borrow the priest's money if you can, and when you have it——"

"But if I would rather be indebted to you——" I cried.

"But I can neither lend nor borrow, I tell you," he replied, thus ending the controversy.

And I got up and left him in a huff; and without one word of adieu.

I went out, walked about, full of bitterness against him, against the priests, against myself. "Borrow from the priests!" I muttered. "The priests my only resource! Had it come to that?"

I walked about fretting and chafing against the fatal necessity which, as I then imagined, held me in its fangs. Had I been in my right mind there would have been nothing so formidable in the situation. A compromise with Miss Lekain, an explanation with Mr. Everett, would easily remove the molehill which my harassed mind magnified into a mountain. But long fast and unrest and worry had dazed my brain. I hardly knew what I was doing. I walked and walked at random, with a vague idea that whatever happened I must not let another night pass without ridding myself of all obligations to Miss Lekain, of all connection with Pearl Street.

My feet almost instinctively seemed to take me to the neighbourhood of the Oratory. I was passing the door just as the clock struck ten. The building was all in darkness. All the inmates had probably retired. With that vague hope I stopped and rang the bell. The door was instantly opened. I looked bewildered and the doorkeeper was almost frightened.

“Whom do you want?”

“Monsignore.”

“This way, if you please.” And to my surprise and dismay I was at once admitted, and found myself in the prelate’s presence.

He was a dignified, good-looking man, somewhat portly and fresh-coloured, and with an unmistakable English face; almost as handsome a man as Cardinal Howard. He rose slightly from his seat, and with an air of great benignity asked me "my business."

What I told him; in what words I explained my want; on what terms I preferred my request, no effort of memory would now bring back to me. I do not know what he thought of me or whom he took me for. He made no remarks and asked no questions. He simply opened a mahogany box on the table before him; he took out two gold pieces and six paper dollars, and laid them before me, apparently without counting them. Thus ended the interview.

I had done it. I had begged my bread, and could hardly believe my senses. What was in my hand was money bestowed in charity. Three days later, I received the letter of my friend Charles Milner, enclosing the ten-dollar note. I folded the note in a parcel with the six paper dollars I had not yet touched, and dropped the parcel into the alms-box of the pro-Cathedral, thereby thinking I had acquitted myself of my debt to the Church. But, on mentioning the transaction to my friend Bachi, I was told

that I had acted unwisely ; that the bishop might never receive that parcel or never dream that it came from me, and naturally conclude that the money had not been borrowed, but given as alms. And thus all my scruples were reawakened, and the wound to my pride bled afresh.

But, three months later, I had saved money enough to be able to make up a new packet, with the same sum of sixteen dollars, which I addressed to the bishop with compliments and thanks, still maintaining my anonymous ; and I delivered it with my own hand at the mission-house door. Thus did the Church, in her dealing with me on that occasion, lend her money at a rate of interest of a hundred per cent. But the transaction of that evening left on my mind a sense of humiliation that no lapse of centuries could either efface or assuage.

I had occasion to meet that bishop at a later period at one of Mr. Ticknor's literary re-unions, where the master of the house amiably introduced me to his lordship. The bishop was bland and courteous, and talked to me without the least shade of constraint or embarrassment, as he might have done with a stranger never seen before. Had he really forgotten me ? or did he fail to recognise in the broad blaze of many tapers

a countenance he had only seen by his own pale lamp-light? or was it that his right hand ignored what the left had done, and by his perfect control over his feelings he wished to re-assure me, and inspire me with the same self-possession, grounded on a mutual oblivion of the past?

Take whatever view one may please, the bishop, as no one will deny, was a gentleman.

But I have anticipated the conclusion of that, the most dolorous episode of my life, and must have done with it at once. Late in the evening of that unfortunate Friday, upon leaving the Oratory with the bishop's dollars in my pocket, I went home to Pearl Street, where I had another sleepless night. On the Saturday I rose late, read till long after twelve o'clock at noon; then packed up my things; then read again till dusk, taking hardly anything in of what I read—on and on till late in the evening, waiting for an opportunity to settle my account with Miss Lekain, and to be gone without any other leave-taking.

When the house at last seemed perfectly noiseless, I went down to the landlady's private parlour on the ground floor, but found there only one of the housemaids, from whom I learnt that Miss Lekain was in the drawing-room. Up to that room I went,

and there indeed she was, but not alone. I found with her the very person whose sight for the last three days I had most carefully shunned. Conspicuous in her usual corner near the chimney sat my pretty widow rocking herself, and opposite to her, on the other side, was a fat flabby old man in a loose dressing-gown and slippers, with a long meerschaum pipe in his mouth. Neither of them was disturbed by my quiet intrusion, or took the least notice of me. But Miss Lekain, of the golden wig, who was seated at a side-table with the tradesmen's account-books before her, jumped up on seeing me, crying out:

“Do you want to see me, signio’?”

And, as she said so, she seized the candle before her with great alacrity and led the way downstairs to her office, where our accounts were soon made up and the money paid down.

“That was Mr. Augustus Notteboom,” the landlady said, volunteering information I had never asked for. “He got here this evening, before he was expected, and just before supper-time; and he came down in his *schlaaf-rook* and *pantoffel*, as he calls them, just as if he had been in one of his own Dutch pot-houses. Such are their beastly manners in the Low Countries. He is a beast, that he is! and you cannot go near

him, he smells that he knocks you down. Were he to be three days in the house my boarders would soon be packing. They all got up and went away this evening before they had quite done supper, ‘to leave the betrothed to their *tête-d-tête*,’ they said, but indeed because no one would sit near the Dutchman. Never mind! The Dutchman has a mint of money, and Mrs. Dana will be as grand a madame as any in Amsterdam. That’s what women sell themselves for nowadays.”

I made no answer. I told Miss Lekain I would look for a street porter, to whom she should deliver my luggage, and one hour later I was in my new quarters at Mrs. Hodge’s, No. 17, Spring Gardens, Charlestown.

CHAPTER V.

UP-HILL WORK.

Charlestown and Bunker's Hill—A new home—New friends—An enemy—A Sabbath-day—A lively breakfast—A godly morning—A great divine—Preaching and stage-acting—A dull dinner—A godless afternoon—Week-days' employment—A stubborn pupil—Increase of custom—Day-work and evening pastime—Yankee girls—Volunteer police—A change in prospect.

No. 17, Spring Gardens, Charlestown, near Boston, was a dull house on a Sunday morning. New England in those days beat Scotland herself in her observance of the Sabbath-day, and Boston was the virtual capital of New England, as it was the nursery of parsons and schoolmasters, the Athens of the United States, and the “Hub of the Universe.” Charlestown was its largest, though not, perhaps, its most fashionable suburb. It lay across the water, north of the River Charles, on the skirts of Bunker's Hill, an eminence which pious old women still called Mount Ararat, famous for an en-

counter between the colonists and King George's troops, fought at the outbreak of the War of Independence, of 1775, in which the Yankees did *not* "lick the Britishers," but in which they behaved with so much pluck as to deserve, or at least to consider themselves entitled to, the monumental obelisk reared in their honour on the summit of the hill—a monument which, in the year of grace, 1836, had only reached one-third of its intended height.

The suburb was mainly recommendable for its cheapness. It was the home of many of the well-to-do minor traders and artisans in the city, and it boasted of a few detached villas of some pretension on the outskirts. It took its ideas in general, its fashions and luxuries from the city; but had its own religion or religions; its various sects and congregations combining the utmost anarchy of creeds with the most complete strictness and monotony of forms of worship.

New England, colonised by emigrants escaping from religious persecution in the mother country, became, as is well known, a savage persecutor in her turn. But something like a reaction against blind bigotry had now set in; the idea of mutual toleration had been accepted as the irresistible corollary of State independence and individual right. And although true religion had lost

nothing of its earnestness and intensity, free scope was given for boundless inquiry and controversy, subject only to the rules of common decency and mutual forbearance.

New England, and especially Massachusetts, and especially Boston, were Congregationalist communities. Every minister was his own Pope. He gave his name to his meeting-house instead of a saint. He dictated his views and doctrines, and enforced his discipline to the full extent of the influence which his eloquence or his character could establish among the elders or vestrymen, who determined his election and constituted his council. His attendance on the synods that were supposed to rule the sect to which he belonged was not compulsory, nor were their resolutions binding upon him. His authority and his very existence were grounded on the free suffrage of his flock, who fattened or starved him ; set him up or pulled him down ; followed him in all phases of faith, in all quibbles of doctrine, according as he managed to humour or to bully them.

On the point of the observance of the Sabbath, however, there was no deviation from the common rule. It was a day of rest, and it was to be kept holy. People made it a duty to rise at least one hour later and to go to

bed two hours earlier. The business of the day was simply eating and praying ; three meals and three services was the rule. At ten in the morning, after a light breakfast, streams of well-dressed, long-visaged people set out, each in different directions, crossing one another with no collision, though with no very warm charity, till each current reached its destination, when the thoroughfares remained deserted, and all life was at a standstill. Two hours later the streams met again on their homeward way, with the same silent gravity, but with an air of partial relief, and a little more mutual sympathy, as if all grateful for relief after the common infliction. Noon was the dinner-hour ; two brought the people together for afternoon service ; four was tea-time ; then evening service ; then supper ; then a Bible chapter or meditation with drooping' eylids, not unlike a doze.

I found Mrs. Hodge's family assembled at breakfast as I went down for the first time into the parlour at half-past nine. My seat had been reserved for me on the landlady's right, facing the hissing hot urn from which the cups were being rinsed. Half hidden by the urn, on the landlady's left, sat Miss Dwight, a lady boarder ; near her, on the same side, were two medical students, Messrs. Brigg and Lyons. The landlady's daughter, Hannah, fourteen years old, sour and pale

like an unripe apple, and her younger brother, Ephraim, a sandy-haired cub with an embryo bumpkin face, had their chairs at the lower end of the table, but jumped up every second waiting on their mother's guests. The head of the family, a grown-up bumpkin, whom no one saw on week-days, and of whom nothing was known, a mere drudge to whom the Sabbath brought no rest, was on the back-stair landing blacking boots. Mrs. Hodge was a stout matron, fifty years of age, tall and majestic, with a grand domineering countenance and a clear resolute voice. She was a worshipper at the Rev. Obadiah Farrow's meeting-house, and the main pillar of that great man's tabernacle. She acknowledged no president or governor, no other ruler above her but her minister, who stood in awe of her, though he was for her God's vicegerent upon earth. He was her daily visitor and weekly guest. She indulged him in his weaknesses, and ministered to his grovelling tastes and appetites in private life, though she prostrated herself before him when on the pulpit. She had been somewhat mollified by Mr. Everett's condescension in introducing me, for Mr. Everett was a great personage in Charlestown, and had been a divine, though in the opinion of the suburb he was in the wrong box as to faith, and was, besides, a backslider. But Mrs. Hodge

had been delighted with him, and not a little curious about me, and was only taken aback by her minister when she mentioned my nationality, the wielder of her conscience hinting that an Italian was almost sure to be a Romanist, likely enough a wolf in sheepskin—a Jesuit in disguise.

There was silence, with deep meditation, after I had taken my seat, and the unavoidable greetings were exchanged. It was broken by the landlady, who turned to me with a look of interest, and spoke.

“I am afraid you will find us heavy and stupid, signio,” she said; “but this is our day of rest. A very different day, I am told, from what you have been accustomed to in your own country.”

“I shall do very well, madam, thank you,” I answered very awkwardly. “I like work better than Sunday amusements.”

“No work here, if you please, sir,” she replied, taking me up sharp; “business to-morrow.”

“Just so,” I said, correcting myself; “to-day everybody to church.”

But I was not all right yet.

“Not everybody, signio,” she explained, “Some go to church; many more to chapel. You will be sure to go to the Oratory.”

"Not quite so sure, Mrs. Hodge," I answered, again putting my foot into it. "I am a Christian, and can join all Christians, no matter of what denomination, as brethren in their devotions."

"Humph," muttered the matron, with a grunt that would have been creditable to her pet minister. "Very broad doctrine that."

"The signio' is a traveller," called out Mr. Briggs, one of the medical students; "do at Rome as the Romans do."

"Romanism won't go down in this country, Mr. Briggs," snapped up the landlady, "that I can tell you."

"Of course you will go to Mr. Farrow's?" put in Miss Dwight, addressing the landlady.

"Of course, as you say," was the answer. "Will you not go with us?"

"No; thank you very much!" quoth Miss Dwight, with a wry face, as if there were something in the proposal to set her teeth on edge. "And if the gentleman," she added, with a slight bow across the table addressed to me, "will keep me company, I shall be most happy to show him the way. Your friend, Mr. Everett," she concluded, "used to preach in what is now Mr. James Walker's meeting-house."

"Mr. Walker is a worthy divine," struck in Mrs.

Hodge ; " and a grander man in the pulpit than Mr. Everett himself. But he—but they are both Unitarians. Very clever men all, but next door to Rationalists."

" That is, reasoning beings," quoth the medical student. " Need all religion be irrational ? "

" I shall not argue the point with you, Mr. Briggs," retorted the landlady. "' Except ye be converted and become as little children '—you know the rest."

I had to accustom myself to this domestic sparring which was then to me a novelty, but which has never since ceased to be dinned into my ears. Religious discussion is daily bread to the Anglo-Saxon race ; the *odium theologicum* not being, as it is with other people, confined within the precincts of the sanctuary, but turning society into a polemic bear-garden and every family into a controversial cockpit. I had lived in countries where tyranny forced men to agree ; I had come to countries where liberty allows them only to agree upon disagreeing.

We had not far to walk to Mr. Walker's church or meeting-house, nor had we a very large stream of people going along with us. For Unitarianism was then the fashionable denomination in Boston, and had

its votaries almost exclusively among the highly educated classes ; and these were but a small minority in Charlestown, where blind Calvinism and rabid Puritanism were still rampant. The church was a large and not inelegant new Grecian building, and was comfortably filled with intelligent-looking people, many of whom were from Boston ; for Mr. Walker had kept up, if not increased, the reputation given to the sacred edifice by Mr. Everett, for whose use it was originally built. As we—Miss Dwight and I—were looking for free seats, Mr. Everett, who was already seated in a large square pew, with his family, kindly made room for us near him.

The service was of the simplest, and differed in no essentials from the common forms of the Presbyterian rite. It began with a solemn voluntary on the organ, played by a masterly hand, during which entered the minister, in his plain college gown, followed by a single lay attendant in black. The minister sat down, allowing the last note of the organ to die away, then rose and read the first lines of a hymn. These were taken up by the congregation singing in a chorus in which well-trained female voices predominated. Then followed an extemporary address to the Deity—as high a strain of poetry as a composition without rhyme or measure

could well be. Then, with the interval of another hymn, came the sermon, taking up the best part of an hour. Then another hymn, after which the congregation was dismissed with a short benediction, and went asunder amidst loud peals of the organ.

Mr. Walker had no rivals among the divines of his sect. He was a man in the prime of life—about forty years old. A stately figure, a noble countenance, the finest voice with the most wonderful powers of modulation were his external gifts, merely accessory to the mental and moral faculties on which he relied for effect. I believe he wrote every word of his sermons, and there was no greater master of style or language; for he was editor and chief contributor to the *Christian Examiner*, the foremost theological review in the United States, and was, in later days, elected President of the Harvard College, *i.e.*, placed at the head of the whole educational establishment of North America. But he forgot both his sermon and himself in the brunt of sudden inspiration, and was, or seemed to be, carried away by the *Deus in nobis*, by that divine enthusiasm which makes a great sacred orator the most consummate stage actor, brooding over his part, clothing himself in it, and sinking his personality in it till nothing of himself is left. There

was no cant or rant, no striving after mere histrionic effect. It was a performance, no doubt ; but it was the result of natural elevation of character and depth of earnest, genuine feeling. Mr. Walker was, at least in the pulpit, as truly the man of God, the bearer of His tidings, the herald of His law, as Macready on the boards was Othello, or Kemble Richard III., as that poor demented Booth was Brutus, when he shouted "*sic semper tyrannis,*" and fired his pistol at the innocent Abe Lincoln.

We came out, Miss Dwight and I, dumb-stricken and almost terrified by the thunder of that impassioned delivery. As we walked home, and gradually recovered our breath, my companion had many particulars to give me about Mr. Walker, about Mr. Everett, and yet another even higher object of her hero-worship, Ralph Waldo Emerson. She herself belonged to the set described by Oliver Wendell Holmes as the "Brahmin Caste of New England," a race of parsons and school-masters. She lived by teaching, poorly and contentedly ; she was old-maidish and ladylike, reading much, and loving writers and thinkers. She had a brother, Professor Dwight, at Providence, Rhode Island, a place where she took me, two weeks later, on what turned out an eventful Sunday.

At Providence, besides her brother, I was introduced to his friend and colleague, George Fuller, and, what was more, to Mr. Fuller's sister, Margaret Fuller, a woman whose greatness began just then to dawn on herself and on the world. For she was on the point of placing herself at the head of a new school of thought, together with her brother, with Ralph Waldo Emerson, and other New England new lights, whose paper, *The Dial*, was soon to point out the hour of the day to mankind. Margaret was very simple and modest, not pretty and not bright, but with something solemn and mystic in all her acts and utterances. She had something of the ecstatic manner of a seer.

Such was the impression she made upon me at first sight, for I had no further opportunity for intimate acquaintance, though I occasionally fell in with her, both in her own country and years later in England. I need hardly tell how, valuable as her work may have been in her life-time, it is mainly on the romance of her death that her fame must rest. The whole world heard how in the zenith of her glory she crossed the ocean, flashed like a meteor over Europe, then in the throes of the hundred revolutions of that *Annus Mirabilis*, 1848, ending her philosophical and aesthetic tour in Rome, amid the din of the rise and fall of

the Mazzinian Republic, which she befriended; and where, when she had already reached the meridian of life, she was caught in the toils of love and marriage, and went back as Marchesa d'Ossoli, a happy wife and mother, only to perish with all she loved just outside New York harbour, not fifty yards from the landing-stairs, and in sight of many of her greeting friends.

But, to go back to my first Sunday in Charlestown, the dinner at Mr. Hodge's, which we found spread on our return to Spring Gardens, was eaten in the same order as the breakfast I have already described, the only addition to the company being the Reverend Obadiah Farrow, who sat in my former post of honour beside the landlady, and who, as we were about to fall to, thumped upon the table with a thundering: "Should we *not* call down Heaven's blessing on our food?"

No one saw any reason why he should not; so he said his say, with an attempt at gravity, but in a great hurry, for the morning service had made him ravenous, and he was more impatient to begin than any of us.

Mr. Farrow was a big man, a prodigious feeder, with a broad jaw and an awful squint, one of whose sinister eyes was steadily fixed upon me, the "*wolf in sheep-skin, Jesuit in disguise*," while the other

wandered greedily from the plate before him to the carving-knife and fork of the ministering landlady. His forbidding countenance seemed to freeze the words on the guests' lips, preventing a return to the interesting but ticklish topics which had enlivened our morning talk.

Our "food," after it had been blessed, consisted of boiled beans and bacon, with huge hunches of "corned" beef, with the never-failing squash and parsnip, and carrot, and hard-boiled eggs and salad, and famous cranberry sauce, followed by a dessert of thanksgiving pies, minced-meat pies, baked for the solemnisation of Thanksgiving Day, the Puritan Christmas, and kept cool from wee^l to week, not only to wait till the President should appoint that great solemnity, but also to grace the board on grand occasions before and after it. In the present instance they came forth as a special treat and compliment to me, the new comer.

The fare was plentiful, if not dainty; but, fortunately, I never cared much for what I ate or drank, and a keen, healthy appetite made me as fully at home with the Yankees of the middle class among whom I had fallen, as I should have been had I been dining under Samoyede or Hottentot tents.

The repast was over in about an hour; and I had risen to open the door for the ladies, when the two medical students stopped me—Briggs acting spokesman—with offers of some choice Havannahs, which, they informed me, the stern discipline of the house only allowed to be smoked in the boarders' own rooms. I found these young men pleasant companions, especially Briggs, who had a great deal to say for himself, acquainted me with the fact that "he hailed from Newburyport, and his friend Lyons from Springfield," and showed me his books, most of them pirated editions of the works then most popular in England, especially the dramas, "Ion," "Philip van Artevelde," "Giraldi Fazio," "The Love Chase," etc., of which he read out a few short passages with much spirit and feeling though with more "mouthing" than Hamlet would have approved of, his friend Lyons, rapt in admiration like a very Pylades, listening to the declamation of his Orestes, while all I could do was to catch a word here and there, by looking over the reader's shoulder, and following him as he went on, line by line, on the book.

Presently, when the town was quiet, its good people digesting their dinner as they could under the infliction of their second sermon, we stole out for a breath of air

and a brisk walk up to Bunker's Hill, and far away to Mount Auburn and Fresh Pond, my friends entertaining me with pretty gossip about their acquaintance in the town, the "fun" they had with the girls, and many a harmless jibe about Mrs. Hodge and her squinting pet minister, with some more serious, free-spoken invectives against the men of his cloth, and a declaration of their conviction that "the country would never thrive till it had *more pigs and less parsons.*" In proof of which they pointed to the ruins of a large edifice close to Bunker's Hill, which had been an Ursuline nunnery, the inoffensive and useful inmates of which had been attacked by a mob stirred by the fire-and-brimstone eloquence of a preacher of the Obadiah stamp, who set fire to the convent, and spirited away the poor sisters from their warm beds, driving them all over the country in their night-gowns in a snow-storm of a New England winter.

Towards dusk we came back all in a glow, and met again in Lyons' rooms, where he was busy mixing his cooling drinks, "mint-juleps and sherry cobblers," to be sipped lovingly through the conventional straw; with which, as with "cocktails, gin-slings, and pick-me-ups," I had soon to become acquainted, though I am thankful to say never intimate; for one could not live otherwise

in that thirsty Yankeeland—a land in which you can hardly call on a dying friend without his opening his filmy eyes, and with his last breath and spent voice blurting out his never-failing : “ What’ll ye drink ? ”

The drift of our talk, as we sipped, was still literary, friend Briggs quoting largely from his Byron and Shelley, known to him by heart, while in the intervals up came the strains of our landlady, who sat in the parlour, brewing her Obadiah’s grog, slowly and drowsily rocking herself in her chair, keeping time with the ticking of her wooden clock, while with folded arms and drooping eyelids she hummed out in a droning voice :

“ From Greenland’s icy mountains,”

the deep base of the minister occasionally striking in with :

“ Salvashon ! O, salvashon ! ”

To which the profane Briggs made response by a slight but wicked modification of the first four letters of the word :

“ D——ation ! O, D——ation ! ”

And such was my first experience of the light and darkness of a New England Sabbath.

On the morrow, Monday, I was up early, dressed with more than my usual care, and punctually at

eleven, presented myself at Mr. Everett's door, ready to take up my task as tutor to his daughters.

The eldest of these young ladies was an infant prodigy ; she had up to her present age of twelve, been her father's love and pride, and had under his tuition developed precocious talents of the very first order, which had been cultivated, or, let us say, *forced* with so much more zeal than discretion, that she was stunted in growth and spoilt in temper ; a poor, thin, sallow, peevish thing, sickly as a hot-house plant, and, as it was easy to foresee, and actually happened, doomed to an early grave ; while her younger sister, with a more genial disposition, was perfectly content to be considered the dunce of the family, and grew up plump and frolicsome, so that I heard of her, years afterwards, as a happy mother and grandmother.

Between me and Miss Everett there was ill-blood from the beginning. She "did not believe I was an Italian ; I did not look like one," she often observed. She disliked my face, as she had good reason to do ; and I felt inclined to quarrel with it myself when I caught the reflection of it in the glass at shaving time ; for it is a face remarkable for a plainness bordering on ugliness ; and an Italian leading journal* has lately

* *Fanfulla*, April 27th, 1883.

characterised it by establishing its striking resemblance to that of "Socrates as he appears in his ancient bust in the Capitoline Museum." Miss Everett would probably not have gone so far as to "hang me for my face," but she certainly was not charitable enough to consider that our features, rough or smooth hewn as they may be, are not our handiwork, that they have been moulded for us without our knowledge or consent, and such as they are we must carry them about with us to our earthly journey's end.

There was no pleasing Miss Everett. "I came," she said, "from the north of Italy, and what could I know of *Lingua Toscana in bocca Romana?*" My French was not like her papa's French, and as to my Latin, there was no possible understanding between us, as her father wished me to teach it with my broad Italian pronunciation, and the stubborn girl stuck to her mincing Oxford vowels; and she laughed at me if, for the sake of quiet living, I humoured her by trying to adopt her English accent.

The vixen was reasonable and submissive enough when her father was present; but this happened very seldom, for the governor's time was taken up by the debate in the Massachusetts Legislature of the "Eighteen Gallons Bill," or "Striped Pig Law," as it was called,

from one of the many tricks by which its provisions were evaded—a bill or law intended to enforce temperance by forbidding the retail trade in liquors—a stolid measure which the party in power managed to carry, but which arrayed against them the mass of the drinking populace and the whole brotherhood of the publicans, who were strong enough to overthrow the Government and repeal the obnoxious enactment at the next election.

In her father's absence, Miss Everett was sure, in her bickerings with me, to be backed by her mother; an indulgent mother who never attended our lessons, but who naturally accepted her daughter's version of all subjects in dispute, and reported to her husband accordingly; so that though the governor was fair enough to listen to both parties and strove for some time to keep the peace with equal balance, he perceived, at the end of a month, that his life was made a burden to him; and he listened to his wife's suggestions that the girls needed a change of air, and that they should be sent to a marine villa at Nahant, where one of her own unmarried sisters was still enjoying the sea-breezes with the latest bathers. To smooth the blow that was thus dealt at my purse and my *amour propre* at the same time, Mr. Everett volunteered to become himself my pupil, and

went with me through a course of readings of Dante in the evenings, in which he persevered with great steadiness, and in spite of his manifold engagements, even when he was forced to perceive that he could crack the hard nuts of the abstruse poet much more easily than his would-be master was able to do.

By this time, fortunately, my prospects as a teacher of languages had brightened; for my friend Miss Dwight had exerted herself in my behalf with heroic and disinterested feminine affection. She had taken me to Providence, as I have said, and introduced me to a little literary *coterie* in which George and Margaret Fuller were conspicuous, and these found me ample employment, if not in Charlestown or Boston, at least in the neighbouring towns of Salem, Lowell, etc., to which I travelled almost every day in the week, either by rail, or on horseback, or as the winter set in, by sledge; my great delight being to ride or drive those incomparable long-legged New England trotters, warranted to carry me at the rate of twelve miles an hour.

Though teaching was never my calling, and I took to it only as a temporary employment, and under protest that "if I was fit for nothing better I might as well never have come to America," yet its practice was

not altogether irksome, as it now and then brought me into contact with interesting young men of my friend Charles B. Milner's stamp, or with still more attractive persons of the gentler sex, whose charms of mind and body were enough to reconcile a man to whatever there might otherwise have been unendurable in the new continent, and some of whose images are still treasured up in memory's shrine as something it has been worth while for a man to have lived and suffered for.

For the rest, such leisure as was allowed me by my avocations, especially on the Sundays and the evenings of the week-days, was spent with my good friends Briggs and Lyons, with whom I took desperately long strolls in the neighbourhood, or visited at their friends' houses in the town, the little suburb of Charlestown having its little social circles, with their round of balls, concerts, and other parties, altogether under the management of the young ladies of the various families, who went to and from such entertainments alone or under the escort of their partners or admirers, with that charming self-dependence and confidence which gives every Anglo-Saxon maiden the sacred character of "Una and the Lion."

To me, accustomed hitherto to the jealous, half-

oriental ways of Italian, French, and Spanish society, the boundless freedom allowed to females in general, and especially to girls in their teens, at their peril and upon their own responsibility, seemed at first as strange and incomprehensible as it was pleasant. I was always wondering what results such intimacy might lead to, and it was only by a deeper initiation into the affairs of the little community that I learnt how thoroughly, both by her own instincts and by her neighbours' example, a Yankee girl is taught to take care of herself and to look to the main chance, drawing a broad distinction between flirtation and—business.

There was hardly one of the most winning *belles* of the town who would not go out with me in the dark—with me, a stranger, a foreigner and “Eye-talian”—show the way to the house of a friend to whose party she had procured me a card; where she would dance, play or flirt with me or anybody else, but whence at the end of the rout she would expect me to be in attendance as her *cavalier servente obbligato* for the evening, my duty being to see her safe home, either by the straightest or by a circuitous route as moonlight or her fancy might suggest; and all would end by my leaving her at her door at or after midnight, where she would stop just one second on the threshold to

shake hands, or to bestow some other slight favour of which it would be unbecoming a gentleman to "tell." And *Honi soit qui mal y pense.*

On the following morning, if I cared, I was welcome to call and inquire how the damsel had slept after her dissipation, when I found her in her drawing-room, a pink of neatness, busy with the perusal of "Henrietta Temple, a Love Story," or "Eugene Aram," two of the "last things out from the old country," when she would with scant ceremony introduce me to the "old woman"—if this latter happened to come in all wrapt in her morning shawl and with her hair in curl-papers—crying out: "Oh, mother, this is Mr. Mariotti, a friend of Josh Briggs, who was with me at the Chaplins' last evening, and who will probably go with me to the Potters' this evening, and who, by the way," she added with an arch expression of affected jealousy, "admired the gray eyes of Louisa Chaplin as if there had been no other eyes in the room." Whereupon the obliging elderly dame would smile and curtsey, and mutter something about "our friend's friends being our friends," and presently retire, pleading the domestic *chores* that demanded her attention, and never showing herself again, had our *tête-à-tête* lasted three hours, her discretion telling her that "two are company and three are none."

To enliven our existence, which in spite even of such harmless philandering might otherwise have been liable to sameness and tameness, there came a little incident which had no serious consequences, but which was nevertheless the cause of considerable alarm.

Boston and its suburbs constituted at that time so orderly and exemplary a community as scarcely to require any armed force or police to keep the peace. With a population of eighty thousand souls a single constable was deemed sufficient to enforce respect to the law, as it was understood that in any emergency the law could rely on the free support of all good citizens. Which might be true enough so long as the passions of the said good citizens lay dormant; for otherwise we have seen, even in this little hole of Charlestown, of what outrage a mob, set up by the intemperate address of a fanatic preacher, could be guilty, with the connivance, or at least without hindrance, of an unarmed authority. We have seen it, I say, in the case of the Ursuline Convent burnt to the ground in a fatal night, during which the only law was lynch law.

But a real element of disorder, in ordinary times, were the Irish, some ten thousand of whom lived in the back slums of the city, higgledy-piggledy with the "Niggers," and whose habit of celebrating their noisy

funerals on the Sabbath day gave dire offence to the native Puritans, and led to frequent collisions with them. One of these half-formidable, half-laughable Irish rows I had already witnessed from my friend Pietro Bachi's windows in Brattle Street, where a large multitude of the sons of Erin had entrenched themselves behind a huge pile of brick-bats, and there withstood a charge of mounted citizen militia, till they were overpowered, when the triumphant Bostonians broke into their wretched houses and gutted them, throwing down the furniture from the windows, and ripping up their mattresses and feather beds with such energy that in a few minutes the whole atmosphere of the city was dense with the floating feathers as with the flakes of a heavy snow-storm; the riot ending after dark with loud paeans and ovations of the victorious party, the vanquished withdrawing from the field, and living to fight another day. That the Irish vowed vengeance, and would have it if they could, we might easily expect; but to what extent their resentment took the shape of the frequent fires which night after night lighted up the darkness of the city and its suburbs was merely matter of conjecture. The fires, however, were rather too frequent, for any man to doubt that they were the work of incendiaries; and to put an end to the evil or to allay the

terrors it caused, the Boston constable bethought himself of the expedient of swearing in a few respectable citizens as special watchmen, assigning them their respective localities, supplying them with hooked staffs, rattles, and lanterns, and bidding them patrol the streets from sunset to sunrise.

Briggs, Lyons, and I, and the *élite* of the youth of our suburb of Charlestown, were of course pressed into this patriotic service, and “jolly nights” we had in the guard-room, where we kept up our spirits and whiled away the tedious hours by much talk and a little drink, and issued forth warm and merry, keeping the streets alive with our heavy tramp, making night hideous by springing our rattles and by the strains of vocal and instrumental music, with which we serenaded Louisa Chaplin, Theresa Potter, Hester Budds, Jane Burbidge, and other beauties whose sweet slumbers we professed to screen from disturbance.

My private affairs meanwhile might be said to be in a flourishing condition. I had work throughout the day, amusement in the night; a moderate but assured income; friends of both sexes; to say nothing of unfailing health and unflagging love of reading; I had paid my debt to the Church twice over, discontinued the Dante readings with Mr. Everett, parting with him on

terms of sincere friendship. There was, in short, nothing I had reason to find fault with; hardly anything by which I could rationally hope to "better myself." Yet, all at once the uneasy feeling which so often made me wish for and look forward to some change began to haunt me. I was not—not yet—tired of America. I did not see how I could emancipate myself from what I foolishly considered my "degrading trade" of a teacher, but to something new I must aspire; to some other home than Mrs. Hodge's; another residence than Charlestown; other friends than Briggs and Lyons; other sweethearts than Louisa Chaplin or Theresa Potter. And the opportunity for the change happily soon presented itself.

CHAPTER VI.

COLLEGE LIFE.

Charlestown to Cambridge—A girls' school—Peach-trees and the New England climate—A lofty home—Cambridge—Harvard University—Professors and students—Rising men—Southern men—Politics—Social circles—Lady friends—Peaches unripe and over-ripe—A flash of jealousy—A walk with Longfellow—Its results.

AMONG the many friendly acts by which kind Miss Dwight had endeavoured to forward me in my business, I must reckon an introduction to Mrs. David Marx, the wife of the Principal of the “Harvard Young Ladies’ Academy,” near Cambridge. Between the establishment so called and the venerable Alma Mater over which the Honourable Josiah Quincy presided, there was not the least connection. But the Academy rose in close proximity to the University, on the high road between Boston and Cambridge, about half-a-mile from the college buildings in this latter place, and its situation

afforded the female academicians the advantage of the lectures delivered in the Young Men's Institute in the Town Hall, which were open to the public, but where the Harvard Professors were often the lecturers, and the Harvard students not unfrequently looked in. For lectures were, at that time, the intellectual daily bread and the only evening entertainment of the upper and middle classes in the United States, when Boston itself could hardly be said to have an opera or play-house, the Tremont Theatre itself never being open for more than two or three months in the year.

The Principal of the Young Ladies' Academy, David Marx, was a dull, uninteresting animal; tall and lank, without a backbone; with dim eyes, hollow cheeks, and drooping whiskers; never looking more than half awake. But his wife was bright and sunny, all life and spirit; and I never was so glad as when I went out with Miss Dwight to spend a Sunday afternoon at the Academy, where we had tea in the garden under a famous peach-tree, which had only four peaches on one of its branches; "a fruit," said the mistress of the house, "that grew to a large size, and had a most delicious flavour." With respect to those fruits there was a standing war between me and the fair lady, inasmuch as I contended that a peach could never ripen in the open-air in New England,

and pointed to those four little balls no bigger than walnuts, which, in my opinion, were visibly shrinking and withering from Sunday to Sunday ; and the lady flamed up with anger—for your Yankees, like your English, are ever touchy on the subject of their climate ; and though loud enough in their abuse of it among themselves, are always, in their intercourse with strangers, as ready to take up the cudgels in defence of it, as if they had made it themselves.

It was at the close of a warm debate on that vexatious subject that Miss Dwight, as we were walking home, communicated to me a proposal of Mrs. Marx that I should move my quarters from Charlestown to Cambridge, and establish myself at the Academy, where I should have my board and residence in return for my services as Professor of Modern Languages.

The offer suited me in many respects, and before a week was over I found myself at home in my new situation. The Academy consisted of a large three-storied, isolated building, surmounted in the centre by a square tower with an open terrace for its roof, which was the part of the house intended for my habitation. My apartment in the tower was airy and spacious, and from its four windows, as well as from the terrace above, it commanded an extensive view of the country

as far as Boston and its harbour, and the villages crowning the heights of the undulating region around. Communication between the house and the tower could only be had through a narrow, winding, wooden staircase, and I was thus in perfect seclusion and solitude in mid-air—a situation which had at all times the greatest charm for me, and for the sake of which I never minded how many hundred steps I might have to climb up. My room was plainly, but not meanly furnished. It had a camp-bed, an arm-chair, a large writing-table, and shelves full of books, among which I found Shakespeare, Gibbon, and other English classics, as well as an “American Cyclopædia,” an excellent English translation of the Leipsic “Conversation Lexikon,” published in New York under the management of Franz Lieber, a German Professor, at that time held in high honour throughout the United States, and especially in Charlestown, South Carolina, where he had his residence. For two or three of those long winter months I shut myself in my lofty abode, and led a scholar’s life. My duties at the Academy were extremely light, the Principal’s object being rather to have it in his power to say that languages might be learnt at his establishment, than to see that they were actually taught. Part of the after-

noon was sufficient for that work, and for such other engagements as I had still from home. But from earliest morning till after noon, I pored over those books. In my boarding-house life at Boston and Charlestown, I had had good opportunities for my practice of colloquial English. But now, in my hermitage, I went through a course of incessant reading, and steeped my thoughts in those English books, till my mind seemed to undergo a thorough transformation, and I began to think, and feel, and breathe in English. I am one of those who believe that a great deal may be learnt from a good dictionary. That American Cyclopædia supplied me with as many ideas as words. I went through the rudiments of universal knowledge, renewed such education as I had had at my Italian University from beginning to end. It was like the superposition of one brain upon another.

Moreover, the practice of correcting my pupils' themes and summoning the English expression that could best convey my foreign thought, gave me the most thorough insight into the intricacies of comparative grammar, and so rapidly advanced me in my English, that I was almost as much at home in the language at the end of my first six months in America as I ever became in the thirty or forty subsequent years.

It was not long also before I perceived that I was living in Cambridge in an altogether different American atmosphere from what I had hitherto been accustomed to. I often attended the evening lectures at the Town Hall; not indeed from any great profit I derived from them—for I often found it difficult to follow the train of other people's spoken thoughts, and knowledge always reached me rather through the eyes than the ears—as because the Lecture in America, like the Opera in Italy, is mainly an occasion, and almost a pretext for social intercourse. I met at the Town Hall such acquaintance as I had, or as I was making from day to day; stopped to talk to them on the Hall steps; walked with them on their way home to their doors, inside their doors; and tarried sometimes till a late hour; till my presence became familiar, and my visits were admitted as a matter of course.

There could be hardly anything in the world more pleasant than Cambridge society was then. Though the distance from Boston was only three miles, the severity of the winter that presently set in made the communication between the two places anything but agreeable; and Cambridge, almost completely isolated, had to put up with such elements of social

life as her own local resources could muster. It was almost altogether an academical society. But it so happened that most of the professors were men of mark ; either young men eager to attain distinction, or elderly gentlemen happy in their consciousness of having achieved it. Most of them had travelled and studied in Europe ; all laboured to divest themselves of the peculiar foibles and prejudices of Yankeeism. Without ceasing to be patriotic, they eschewed politics, at least home politics ; for those were still the days of Andrew Jackson (Old Hickory). Under the almost absolute rule of that soldier president, there was a truce to the usual agitation of national parties ; and as to mere local State questions, such as the "Striped Pig Law," they seldom troubled the serene strata of our academical atmosphere. Cambridge scholars prided themselves in purity of language, in refinement of taste, in a simplicity and freedom of manners not entirely dissociated with a certain polish and elegance. And as it must always naturally happen where the sexes are placed socially on a footing of equality, the ladies were more amusing and interesting, more brilliant companions than their lords ; for these latter were by the nature of their business what we now call "specialists ;" men mainly

if not wholly absorbed in some particular branch of study, not much at home on other subjects, and not very eloquent even in their own; for they laboured under the perpetual fear lest their hobby might run away with them; lest they should carry their hearers out of their depth; lest they should be voted bores and pedants, men of one idea or of one order of ideas, unable to "sink the shop" and be like other men in a drawing-room. While for their own part the ladies were general readers, more desultory and catholic in their theories, with peculiar gifts enabling them to choose their own subject, and give whatever turn they pleased to the conversation, so as to fit the talk to their listeners; they were more expansive, more sympathetic, more enthusiastic on a variety of topics.

The first and best of my Cambridge female friends were the two sisters of my earliest Boston acquaintance, Charles B. Milner, Sarah and Harriett, to whom he had introduced me two months before, and who seemed now bent on indemnifying me for his unavoidably prolonged absence by being everything to me that he might wish to have been. The elder, as I said, was the wife of the professor of astronomy, Benjamin Percy, a mathematician of good renown, who had published an English translation of La Place's "*Mécanique Céleste*,"

had been its author's friend and constant correspondent, and was now deeply engaged in some original writings of his own. His life was above the clouds, and he was seldom out of his working-room ; but he was jovial and sociable when he condescended to come down into this nether world, and lived very happily with his wife, who was free from the encumbrance of children, and was therefore glad of her younger sister's constant company. For weeks and months of my acquaintance with these ladies I was considering within myself with which of them I should fall in love, for in love with somebody I must of course be wherever I went—a matter of but little consequence to the object of my devotion, as my love was of a quiet, unaggressive nature, and it could do nobody harm, whatever good it might do to myself. Mrs. Percy was a clever, keen-witted, sensible woman, pungent and sarcastic in her jests and repartees. She was about twenty-seven years of age, in the early pride of her matronly beauty. Her sister was barely out of her teens, thin and agile, with a fresh, light-pink complexion, sylph-like. There was between them a potential resemblance with a difference, as between the rose and the rosebud. Both were good-looking ; both were sharp and lively, but the elder had much of the softness and roundness, of the dignity and demureness

of the grown-up cat; the younger had more of the playful graces, of the half-coaxing, half-scratching skittishness of the kitten.

I was a good deal with these sisters, dangling about them in the evening, going with them to their friends' houses where the company assembled, sharing with them the winter pleasures of skating, sledge-driving, or "sleighting," as they called it, or walking on the crisp, hard-frozen snow. The most sociable houses, besides the Percys', were Mrs. Fay's—Judge Fay's wife, with an only daughter, a fine, strapping girl, fair, handsome, and good, and an heiress; and next door to the Fays were the Websters, the family of Professor Webster, an M.D. with a large bevy of daughters, established for several years in New England, but originally coming from Madeira; the professor, an under-sized, thick-set, bullet-headed man, with wife and daughters very much like him, all of them short, globular, and solid, with dingy complexions suggestive of more than a few drops of Spanish, Portuguese, or even darker blood in their veins. They made up a homogeneous household, all kind and hospitable, simple-minded and affectionate, musical, artistic, accomplished; all intent on pleasing their guests, and anxious to bring together many of them—the very last house, and the

very last man one could ever have dreamt of associating with a crime of the deepest dye ; yet it was that same bullet-headed professor, as many now living may remember, who a few years later startled the world by deliberately murdering, in his laboratory in Boston, a creditor who had dunned him out of all endurance, and cutting him up into mince-meat, in the vain hope of escaping detection and punishment.

Besides these there were other families of equal or higher social rank, whose houses, owing to some peculiar domestic circumstances, were not equally opened to evening visitors, but whose masters or mistresses were also friendly and into whose good graces I managed to make my way. One was the family of Mr. Andrews Norton, an eminent divine, for several years at the head of the theological Unitarian school, then a secluded invalid, though always an active writer ; whose wife, Catherine Eliot, a stately lady, still young, of a wealthy family, highly-educated, had been among the earliest and warmest friends of Piero Maroncelli, Foresti, Castiglia, Borsieri, and other Italian prisoners, lately released from the cells or dungeons of the Austrian state fortress of Spielberg ; and who was just then revising the proofs of her translation of Pellico's "Le Mie Prigioni," the best

version of that singular ascetic book extant in any language.

A member of the same family was an only son, Charley Norton, as he was then called, a promising boy of ten, now ripened into Charles Eliot Norton, a traveller and art-critic, apparently aspiring to the reputation of the American Ruskin.

Another house, also with the door ajar, so to say, rather than closed, was that of Judge Story, the great jurist, whose authority on legal subjects carried then as much weight in the old as in the new world, whose home was at Cambridge, but who was often absent as a judge of the Supreme Court at Washington, and even when at home could spare but little time from the compilation of his "Commentaries," yet who never showed himself without winning men and women by his still handsome presence, his bland, courtly address, and sly humour. A great attraction to the house was his daughter, Mary; a charming young lady with much of her father's look and manner, wise and quiet, and with none of the gushing, noisy energy characteristic of too many even of the better class of Yankee girls. Less frequently seen than the judge's daughter was his son, William Wetmore Story, at that time still an undergraduate; as hard-working as

his father, and to whom men already gave credit for that versatility of mind which enabled him in after years to wield the pen, the brush, and the chisel with a talent bordering upon, though in the opinion of his critics, just stopping short of genius.

But of other interesting individuals, married or single, old or young, teachers or students, who frequented those houses and grouped themselves around the main figures of my Cambridge acquaintance, the name was Legion; many of them men of whom the world has heard much, of some of whom it expects to hear more.

There were first the divines, the new lights of the Unitarian school of theology, the disciples of Andrews Norton and William Ellery Channing, John Gorham Palfrey, Henry Ware, junior (the senior still living and not very old), with other professors of divinity—all pretty good sacred orators, but better writers; all busy as editors or contributors to the *North American Review*, a publication which had then reached its highest standing, and which still struggles to maintain it at the present day.

There were graduates and undergraduates of the University; promising youths, who were soon to fulfil their promises; young men like Richard Henry Dana,

then aged 22, who had just come back from his madcap cruise and was then at work on his "Two Years before the Mast"; men like James Russell Lowell, of the "Biglow Papers," now United States Minister at the Court of St. James; men like Oliver Wendell Holmes, who had already published a small volume of half-sentimental, half-humorous poems, but who, soon finding out that "Carmina non dant panem," deserted the Muses and took seriously to the medical profession; and it was only several years later, when he had ensured his position as medical professor at Harvard, that he came forth again as editor of a magazine, author of the "Autoocrat of the Breakfast Table" and of "Elsie Venner," the latter one of the greatest and strangest novels of our age, in which the author's knowledge as a physician is blended with his imagination as a poet, and both are brought to bear upon the solution of metaphysical and physiological problems about which he had long cudgelled his brains as a philosopher.

Distinguished among the students were two graduates who still lingered about the precincts of the University, Charles Sumner and Bancroft Davies, both clever, gentlemanly youths, who had just achieved their first European tour and brought back some notions of European refinement, who had been welcomed in Eng-

land in the best social circles, and were enthusiastic admirers of everything English, yet—sad to say!—whose juvenile Anglomania was in later years turned to sour Anglophobia, when, at the close of the American Civil War of 1861–65, Sumner fanned into a flame the smouldering embers of Yankee rancour against the old country in the Senate at Washington, and Davies stood up, Shylock-wise, for his pound of John Bull's flesh at the Geneva Conference for the settlement of the Alabama Claims, in 1872.

Halcyon days, still, were these in which it had befallen my lot to live in the United States. Political and trading interests had brought about a truce between the North and South of the great Union. There was a virtual, if not an actual, adjournment of the vital question of negro slavery; and although Sambo was still hailed as “a man and a brother” in Longfellow’s verse and Channing’s prose, although Lloyd Garrison and other fanatics still ventured across the borders of “Dixie’s Land,” and carried on an apostleship which often ended in martyrdom, yet the idea began to gain ground that the general interests of the country imposed on all reasonable men the duty of mutual forbearance; that slavery should be looked upon as a peculiar institution of some states, with which other

States had no business to meddle; and that Lloyd Garrison and his fellows, some of whom had been tarred and feathered, and whose revolutionary printing-presses had been burnt, had only met the fate they richly deserved.

These were not yet the times of “Uncle Tom’s Cabin,” nor would such times ever have been, had not what was a mere moral question been mixed up with the political animosities of party warfare. The Boston merchants were at this period bidding higher than ever for the custom of Southern planters; and scores of Carolina and Georgia youngsters matriculated at Harvard, where they were not only extremely popular among their Yankee classmates, but also readily admitted into the best social circles, both at Cambridge and Boston, and looked up to as gentlemen and aristocrats, the scions of old Cavalier families, altogether a superior breed to that of the “money-grubbing, psalm-singing, canting and cheating descendants of New England Puritans.” Some of these Southerners were no doubt tall, athletic fellows; they had the habit of command, a lofty way of making free with their money and running into debt; but all this could scarcely reconcile one to the nastiness of their smoking to excess and spitting, to the negro accent which

they sucked with their milk from black nurses, to their swagger and bluster, their drinking and betting, gambling and quarrelling, and other vices which their partial friends held up as virtues, in disparagement of the more sober and cleanly, though more homely and niggardly habits peculiar to the rawest Yankees.

Among these strange and to me all new phases of American life I felt as if my old school and college days had come back again, and I was going through a second course of academical studies. I joined the students in their sports and frolics ; mimicked with them the peculiarities of the Teutonic accent of our German teacher, though he was no less a man than Charles Follen, a German patriot of the old Tugendbund days ; a friend of Arndt, Jahn, and other heroes of the memorable "Year Thirteen," and a suspected accomplice of Sand, Kotzebue's crack-brained murderer —although he made himself a high position in America as a poet, a scholar, a jurist, and a divine ; and went from State to State as a missionary, preaching Unitarianism with the zeal of a convert ; till his career was cut short by a tragic death, in 1840, when the steamer that was conveying him from New York to Providence caught fire, and he perished by burning or drowning, with 175 of his fellow-passengers.

It may seem hardly credible that I, an outside barbarian, who even now, after a fifty years' practice, can still hardly ever open my lips without betraying my foreign accent, should be so prodigiously silly as to make fun of poor Follen, because he objected to sign the “*Dirty-nine Articles*,” because he spoke of the Hebrews as the chosen *Beoble*, and prefaced his address to the Deity with his solemn “let us Bray.”

Still more thoughtless and ruthless was our treatment of the French master, Monsieur Sales, an elderly gentleman of high rank and courtly manners, who had to fly from his country in the darkest days of the Reign of Terror, and found in Cambridge a refuge which he was loth to quit at the Restoration of 1814; and who, although he had dropped his titles and honours in a republican community, still cherished in his heart the remembrances of the France of his youth, and went about the University buildings wearing the round broad-brimmed hat, the powdered wig and pigtail, the cut-away coat, the tall, gold-headed Malacca cane—all the old fashions of the court of Louis XVI. and Marie Antoinette. From tying a string to that pigtail and hoisting that wig in the air while the mounsheer was unfolding the theory of the irregular verbs, what truant schoolboy's hand could possibly have refrained?

And in the company of schoolboys I was myself little better than the merest school-baby. I am bound to confess that my brain was one of those which blossom early yet ripen late. Though I was always the youngest of my classmates in my college studies in Italy, my sympathies were always with my juniors ; and even at this American phase of my life, when I was more than a quarter of a century old, in the midst of all the semi-tragic moods and mock-heroic yearnings of a passionate Quixotic nature—in spite also of the desperate odds against which I had to fight the battle of life—it was not without some effort that I resisted the temptation to play childish monkey tricks, or indulge in harmless but foolish practical jokes.

Who could believe, for instance, that I took a fiendish delight in teasing and nagging my amiable friend, Mrs. Marx, on the subject of those famous four peaches in her Academy garden about which her patriotic susceptibilities had been so cruelly wounded on our first interview ? The quarrel between us about those poor withered and shrunken fruits had gone on throughout the fall, and was kept up till the first frost set in and the country was white with a sprinkling of snow, when I plucked them from the branch, laid them in a large china dish before her as she sat at table with her schoolgirls at

the end of dinner, and "Here!" I exclaimed, "here, young ladies, are Mrs. Marx's peaches, beautifully candied and sugared, for your dessert." Then pointing my finger at the chafing schoolmistress, amid the ill-smothered tittering of her pupils: "I hope," I said, "you will now agree that your cooking apple is the only fruit that will ripen in this bleak New England climate."

It was a too easy and wanton victory, for I well knew that peaches came to full maturity in the good lady's garden once every three or four years, and I was well aware that the State of New Jersey was a very forest of thriving peach-trees; and as for cooking apples, it is known to the world that no country can rival the magnificent pippins of New Hampshire. But I wished to have my laugh at the matron's expense, and it was only too late that I perceived that the jest had been carried too far, and that it was more than the victim could bear. In my anxiety to smooth the dear lady's rumpled feelings, I bethought myself of a house where I had lately seen, and where I could easily procure four peaches, far better than those to which the inclemency of the Cambridge air would allow a fair chance even in the most propitious season. I had that very day to ride on my teacher's business to a

large farm, three or four miles north of Cambridge, belonging to Mr. Hambro, a rich Boston merchant, with a fine garden and a well-supplied row of green-houses. Mrs. Hambro and her daughters had often shown me their graperies and pineries, taking especial pride in a wall on which were spread the branches of a peach-tree in espalier laden with fruits, larger or juicier than which I have never seen unless it be in the Duke of Devonshire's conservatories at Chatsworth. Of these I begged four from Mrs. Hambro, who kindly wrapped them up in broad vine-leaves, and put them into a napkin which, upon taking leave, I tied to my saddle-bow. My haste to deliver my precious gift, and the smart trot of my willing hack, soon brought me back to the Academy, where I again found the mistress and her pupils seated at tea, and where I laid down my bundle with a triumphant air, saying :

“ Here, Mrs. Marx ! Here are peaches, fairly ripened, mellow, luscious peaches ; and they are genuine New England peaches. I was a fool to vex you. I have no doubt now yours would have grown up to the size of these, had I left them on their branch till next Easter. See here ! ”

She looked, and all looked ; and as I untied the end of the napkin, and threw open the bundle, behold !

four large peach-stones half buried in a pulpy mash, sticking to the vine-leaves, while a great part of the juice oozed through the tissue of the napkin, and, as I perceived now that I also looked, had run down in a broad fragrant streak along the left side of my nether garment. Thus was Mrs. Marx fully avenged, and her girls' laughter was turned against me.

Of these girls with whom I found myself domesticated, somewhat like a kite in a dovecot, some were almost grown-up women, and some of them—two of them at least—in my Italian class were no unfair specimens of blossoming Yankee beauty. One was like a violet, pale and shrinking, had large gray eyes with long lashes, casting on the whole countenance so deep a shade of sweet melancholy, that I could not help telling her one day that to look at her was like uttering her name—Helen Hurd—a name which, on account of the alliteration of the aspirates, I could never pronounce without sighing. The other's name was Lizzie Baker, which I took the liberty to translate into *Fornarina*, a merry lass with a lustrous face and a bouncing figure, whom I delighted by frequent allusions to the wonders of Raphael's favourite model, of which I told her she was a perfect picture.

To what extent I cared for these girls, and whether

my preference was given to the *Penserosa* or the *Allegra*, I never troubled myself to inquire, and would never have found out, had it not been for an untoward encounter, in which, I must say, I behaved in a black-guard manner, of which I could never have thought myself capable.

Mr. Marx had in his establishment, as a Latin usher, a half-starved poor devil, by name Vincent Wilson, who followed his course at Harvard as a divinity student, and lent his services at the Academy for little more than his board and lodging. He was a small, thin, weakly youth, with the hatchet-face, the high cheekbones, the angular features, the dark-red complexion, which, either owing to mixed blood or to some mysterious influence of the climate, gives to many Yankees the characteristic type of the native Red Indian race.

The upper class of our young ladies had been told off for the evening lecture at the Town Hall, Wilson and I going with them as an escort, the principal and his wife following a few minutes later. Helen and Lizzie headed the fair procession, and I had already made up my mind to offer my arm to the former, when the usher went up to the other with the same intention. I can hardly say what strange, sudden, perverse fit of jealous

anger seized me. All I know is that I rushed at once between Lizzie and her would-be cavalier, tore the girl's arm from him, and pushed him rudely aside, crying, "Stand back, sir! Lizzie is my own."

He was thunderstruck for an instant, but soon he turned purple and livid, looking tomahawks and scalping-knives at me, and revealing all the vindictive feelings of the savage. But it was only a flash of momentary passion. Whether he bethought himself that his cloth forbade him to engage in battle, or whether he fancied that as an Italian, I must have a stiletto secreted about my waistcoat pocket, he fell back to the rear, allowing me to walk on with one of the two half-terrified, half-flattered damsels on each arm, bearing them off all the way to the lecture-room as the prize of a too easy victory.

It was a blackguard deed; and, I hope, quite at variance with every *trait* of my character; one of those sallies of temper which a man should never allow himself, and which he is sure to remember and bitterly regret all his lifetime.

I was walking slowly past Cragie House on the following day, still very much ashamed of myself, when I saw the tenant of the place, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, standing at the gate with his friend the

Greek professor, Cornelius Felton, pulling on his gloves, and preparing to go out.

"Here comes our Italian," said the poet, in an undertone, but which did not escape my keen sense of hearing. "And he comes in a brown study, reminding me of Guido Cavalcanti, whom Boccaccio describes as going about with a downcast head, as if wondering if one could make out that God does not exist." *

And as he stepped out into the footpath flanking the road, he addressed me with a smile.

"A penny for your thought, signor," said he.

"That would be filching a copper from you, professor," I answered. "The day is rather warm, and it is my custom to go, like Gozzi, thoughtful in mien, vacant in mind.† I was on my way to Mount Auburn," I added. "Will you go?"

Upon which, to my surprise, he shook hands with Felton, who had to attend his class in college, and declared he was ready to join me in my afternoon stroll.

Longfellow was then about thirty years old, beautiful as the god of day, with golden hair which

* "Se trovar si potesse che Dio non fosse."

† "Pensoso in vista, com' io soglio, e dentro senza pensier."

he wore down to his shoulders, clear blue eyes, a fair, healthy complexion, and well-cut features. He was somewhat undersized, but there was both ease and dignity in all his movements, and the expression in his face was that of a cheerful, benevolent disposition.

I had read "*Outre-mer*," which I found somewhat affected and insipid, and a few of his early poems, which did not seem to me to rise above mediocrity. But I had some talk with him on subjects with which I thought I ought to have been tolerably conversant, and which gave me a high idea of his proficiency in those branches of literature which he had taught, first at Bowdoin College in his native Maine, and later at Harvard. What I was especially struck with was his charm and elegance of utterance, which made me set him down rather as a talker or teacher than a writer.

We had only met twice or three times at friends' houses, but there had been no interchange of visits; and I surmised that by volunteering his company in my walk he had an object which, I had no doubt, could bode me no ill. To see Longfellow and not to like him—not to love him at first sight as a Pico della Mirandola or a Crichton, is more than many men could do.

He spoke with genuine feeling of the beauty of our language; informed me that he was busy with a prose translation of Dante, which was published many years later. He asked me to recite some of the passages of the divine poem, which I knew by heart, regretting his inability to master the indefinable *nuances* of the Italian accent. Then he proceeded to catechise me on the subject of living Italian literature; stopped at the gate of the cemetery, and inquired whether I had read Alessandro's "Monte Auburno;" finally coming to the point, he turned all the light of his blue eyes upon me, and said:

"What about yourself, Signor Mariotti? Surely you have written and you do write poetry, do you not?"

"Guilty, my lord," I pleaded. "I have wasted reams of paper in my day, but I have burnt every sheet of it. What I write is for me alone; it is what no man could have patience to read, what I have vowed no man shall read."

"Be it so," he insisted; "but I do not propose to read, I only ask *you* to read—or recite—to me what is denied to all men. There shall be no breach of your vow; and think how great shall be my privilege!"

I need not tell how long the matter was debated between us, nor can any one doubt how the discussion ended. Of course he would take no denial ; and of course I was too much flattered not to be overruled.

There were in my desk about half-a-score of short pieces, chiefly *Romanze*, or ballads on chivalrous subjects, with which I had cheered my weary hours in Tangiers, attuning my verses to some of Bellini's airs, popular at that epoch. They belonged to what was called the "romantic school," based on the study of German and English literature, of which Manzoni, Grossi, Berchet, and other Lombards had taken the lead, but which, I believe, has now been set aside as out of fashion.

It was not without a shamed face and a faltering voice that I stammered out a few stanzas of "Blondel and King Richard," "Gabrielle de Vergy," "Inez de Castro," etc. ; but he listened with apparent interest, bade me repeat some of the verses, and asked for more, till he had not only coaxed all I had to give out of me, but actually, before we left the cemetery, had extorted from me a promise to leave the manuscript in his hands for his calmer perusal.

To make the matter short, he had his way in everything. He read the ballads ; gave them to Charles

Folsom, the manager of the University Press, to put them into type ; submitted the proofs to me for correction and revision ; had them printed and published in a neat little volume, *édition de luxe* ; and asked his friend, Henry Theodore Tuckerman, who was then rising into high reputation as a literary and artistic critic, to review them in the *Boston Courier*. The review was favourable, and it gave a translation of some of the pieces. The whole edition was sold. I had the unspeakable satisfaction of seeing myself in print, and being the talk of the town for nearly nine days.

There was not much, I fear, in those juvenile productions. I brought them out again in a new edition in London, in 1844, published by Rolandi, with some additional pieces, under the title of “*Oltremonte ed Oltremare*” ; and I am bound to confess that they attracted but little notice, though probably not less than they deserved.

CHAPTER VII.

CAMBRIDGE SOCIETY.

A new situation—*Pro* and *contra*—Soldier or teacher?—Schoolgirls' nature—Social intercourse—A stranger's popularity—The *ami de la maison*—Two charming women—A fancy fair—A ladies' post-office—Doggerel poetry—A success—The long vacation—Deep at work—A western tour—A black-gown meeting—A New England autumn.

AFTER that walk with Longfellow I felt like a new man. I did not, indeed, blind myself to the real merits of my poetical effusions, and could make due allowance for the mere goodwill of the kind friends who had brought them into notice. Moreover, I was by no means sure that even their unbiassed judgment of verses in a foreign language might be accepted as decisive and final. Longfellow himself could hardly as yet be said to have established his reputation. His pupils and friends had certainly a high opinion of him; but “Hyperion” and “Voices of the Night” had not yet

appeared, and what he had hitherto published had not taken a very firm hold of the public even in his native land; and there was nothing in his productions that seemed to justify the long hair and the somewhat outlandish, picturesque garb by which he made himself conspicuous. Both himself and Tuckerman were only looked upon as rising men.

But even attaching the utmost importance to the good opinion they might have of me, I could not help feeling that my success as a literary man must be in every sense ephemeral. I could never make my living in America by writing Italian verse. Holmes and Pierpoint had proved how even English poetry could earn no daily bread in New England; and what hope could I entertain of ever being able to set up as an English writer, be it of rhyme or prose?

Was there no other business open to me than that of a teacher of language? Had I not loathed that employment in the Old World, and should I never be fit for anything better in the New? What had become of my hankering after a military—a warlike career? Was not that, in my estimation, the only calling for a gentleman? Yet what chance was there of my being a soldier in America? I had opened my mind on the subject to Mr. Everett in one of my

earliest interviews with him at Charlestown. He had told me, not without his usual grave, benignant smile, that "I had brought my pigs to the wrong market," that soldiers were of but little account in the United States, where they never dared to show themselves in their uniforms among the citizens of the eastern cities, lest their presence should awaken the jealous susceptibilities of a free people. The army of the great republic, he said, did not exceed 10,000 men, and these were quartered beyond the boundaries of ^{an} ~~wh~~ ilisation, all along the frontier of the Far West, ~~wh~~ ere their only occupation—a laborious and even a perilous one—was to hunt down the buffalo and the wild Indian.

"The Secretary for War," he concluded, "is my friend. It would not be difficult for me to get you an ensign's commission, and I might at once write to Washington, if you really meant it, and could make up your mind about it."

Of course, I jumped at the offer; and he sent in the application in my name, observing that there would always be time to draw back if I thought better of it. But there was hardly any occasion for deliberation. The War Secretary answered that he was only too happy to place an ensign's commission at Mr. Everett's

disposal ; but accompanied his letter with the "Rules and Bye-laws relating to Enlistments and Promotions," and one of its clauses forbade the admission as an officer of any one past the age of twenty-one, no exception being made even for the cadets of the Military Academy at West Point. And I was then in my twenty-fifth year !

This settled the matter. I had then renounced all hope of being a soldier, which was to me the ideal of a man's life, and I dared not now think myself born to be a poet, which might have seemed the next best thing. I must, therefore, resign myself to be a teacher—possibly a teacher for life. Fortunately, in proportion as the necessity of looking on my employment in that capacity as a permanence was forced upon me, I began gradually to overcome my distaste for it, and to acknowledge that there was sweetness enough mixed with the bitterness to reconcile a man to that or to any other irksome occupation.

In the first place, my business, with very rare exceptions, was with female pupils. I liked them—most of them. It did me good to be with them ; they kept my heart warm and kept it sober, for there was safety in numbers ; and whatever freedom might be allowed to the eyes, there was a Papageno-like padlock

of duty and honour on the lips. I was with them on business; between them and me there was the barrier of the irregular verbs. Had I only been a visitor, received on equal terms, I still could hardly have made my way with them; for I was shy, deficient in small talk, and might easily have been set aside as a “gawk” or a “muff.” But I went in professionally, invested with a master’s, *i.e.*, with little less or much more than a parent’s authority. However pert and ~~al~~denish the girls might be in my absence, however ~~what~~ily they might laugh at my expense behind my back, ^a lesson-time they came to me demure and submissive, and there was no end to the cajoleries and coquetties by which they strove to win my good-will, and keep me in good-humour. How earnest and eager they were in their studies, at least for a time! How anxious for praises which were so seldom awarded! How ready with apologies to ward off rebukes which were hardly ever administered! What bright intelligence they displayed! What keen sensibilities! What rapid alternation of smiles and tears, called forth by a perpetual succession of indefinable yet uncontrollable emotions! Wonderful magnetism of intersexual sympathies! There is hardly a lass who will not, if she can overcome her dread of him, prefer a master’s tuition to a mistress’s;

hardly a lad that will not rather work with his sister's governess than with his own tutor, whatever opinion he may have of the pedagogical abilities of either of them.

It was but seldom, however, that the zeal of my fair pupils for their philological studies endured beyond a few weeks. There were too many domestic duties, or social pleasures, too many superior attractions of the singing, drawing or dancing masters, to damp their ardour for mere pronouns and participles. Some of them were wearied by my insistence in forcing in their stubborn English organs to the utterance of pure Tuscan or Roman sounds. No eloquence of mine could convince them of the necessity of opening their mouths to the average Southern width. In the matter of translation, in learning by heart, they showed more than sufficient aptness and quickness. It was in the mere parrot work that they broke down. Their difficulty lay in their catching and repeating the words which I spoke or read aloud to them; dulness of ear was the most common failing, which interfered with any attempt at conversation; and as they liked to talk, and talk they must on any terms, they broke out in their own sprightly Yankee, when the parts were reversed; and instead of their learning Italian, it was myself who made progress in my English.

There was another circumstance that tended to reconcile me to my teaching trade; and that was the estimation in which it was held by all about me. New England was nothing if not pedagogical; Cambridge was neither more nor less than a teaching shop. Between a teacher of Italian and a professor of Latin, or Greek, of physics, or metaphysics, the difference was only of degrees; and the finest range of houses in the town was only “Professors’ Row.” Moreover, although the notion of republican equality in America, whatever might be thought of it politically, was socially an egregious delusion, still some allowance was made in favour of an alien, who was not born and brought up to the profession, who had not chosen it, and had only been driven to it by the force of circumstances beyond his control. Although nothing may be known or said about a new-comer’s birth or extraction, he will easily be taken at, or even above, his own valuation, if his manners and education seem to any extent to justify his assumption. It certainly never happened to me—as to a French Royalist *émigré*, who earned his livelihood by frying and selling fritters on an oven at a corner of Broadway in New York—to be suspected of being “a prince in disguise.” But few were the houses where I entered as a teacher in

which I was not received as a gentleman ; a teacher and gentleman in the schoolroom in the morning ; a gentleman, friend and guest in the parlour or drawing-room in the evening.

Society in those days, it must be observed, was, in America and especially in New England, something very different from what I found it in later visits. It was in a great measure an untravelled country. The thousands that came to it as emigrants were mere illiterate boors and labourers. For their own part, the Americans who ever went abroad for any other than commercial purposes were few in number. Those who—like Everett, Ticknor, Longfellow, etc.—left home as students, saw little besides the walls of Göttingen and other German universities, and seldom allowed themselves more than a run and race along the common tourist track.

Up to the fall of Napoleon, the Continent was closed to them as to the English, for which they risked to be mistaken ; and it was some time, even after the Peace of 1815, before a few of the wealthiest and most enterprising ventured as pioneers to brave the discomforts of long-disused highways, inns, and posting-houses.

In a country still severed from the Old World by

the whole width of the ocean, at a time in which the very thought of a transatlantic steam navigation had as yet hardly been seriously entertained, a “foreigner”—for so every stranger not a native of the British Isles was still emphatically styled in America, as well as in England itself—if he knew how to present and behave himself, was sure to excite at least an idle curiosity, which it was always in his power to turn into earnest and lasting interest. He brought with civility novelty and variety, oddities and peculiarities, which were easily condoned, when they were not of a nature to be particularly admired. His broken English itself had a charm which caused it to be mimicked, and almost brought it into fashion; just as the Italian accent of the French Queens of the house of Medici came into vogue at the Court of the Louvre.

A foreigner, in short, was the lion of a season in American circles, and it was for him to see how he could keep his place against any other animal that might come to supplant him. Foremost among all aliens were the Italians, because, as I have said, Pellico’s fellow-sufferers at Spielberg had won all good men’s esteem and love in the American cities, and exalted the name of their country and cause—a cause

about which there could scarcely be dissentient opinions, as Austrian supremacy in Italy was not even grounded on actual rights of conquest, and rested on mere diplomatic arrangements, about which the nation had never been consulted. Of the released captives of Spielberg, some were settled in Philadelphia and New York, others in Springfield, Massachusetts ; but none had taken up their residence either in Cambridge or Boston. The field was now clear. Bachi and D'Alessandro had had their own day, and it was now upon me alone that the sympathies of the Italophiles of this part of New England could be expected to centre.

Of all the houses open to me in Cambridge, the one to which inclination most assiduously led me was that of Professor Percy, probably for the reason that I had not from the beginning entered it professionally, but as a personal friend of Charles Milner, who introduced me to his sisters. There I made bold to drop in uninvited in the evenings ; first, four or five, and at last all the seven evenings in the week ; till my visits became matter of daily occurrence, and I was received as the inevitable and indispensable friend of the house.

I was at the time deep in my encyclopædical readings, and I came in full of the subjects which had

engrossed me in the mornings, which had for me all the charm of novelty, but on which my lady friends, Mrs. Percy and her sister Harriett, who had had the advantage of a more than average female education at some renowned academy at Troy or Albany on the Hudson, were quite competent to be my mentors. I thus found myself at school where I had come to tea; but there was nothing didactic in our learned entertainments. Mrs. Percy, who had a horror of a blue-stocking, and took as much pains to hide her light as any other woman conscious of her acquirements might have been tempted to exhibit it, managed to keep our talk within such terms as made it grave enough to wean the professor, her husband, from the abstract speculations in which his mind was usually absorbed, yet sufficiently light to admit the pleasantries, the fancies and conceits by which her sister Harriett, "the kitten," enlivened it.

In the midst of the quiet of that private intercourse, the spring of the year 1837 broke upon us, when something occurred which gave me a chance of being of some use to the friends by whose kindness I was so signally profiting. There was to be in Cambridge a Ladies' Fair or Bazaar in behalf of some public charity; and my friends, Mrs. Percy and her

sister, were to have the management of the post-office department—a task in which they thought they might avail themselves of my co-operation.

Both the bazaar and the post-office were as yet novelties in New England; and they were contrived to embolden ladies and young ladies, as keepers of amateur flower, cigar, and liquor shops, and sellers of pin-cushions, embroidered braces, and nicknacks of every worthless description, to dip their fingers into the gentlemen's waistcoat pockets and rifle them of their loose cash, making themselves beggars and cheats for the benefit of *bond fide* mendicants and poor rogues; thus carrying to the utmost extent the practice of that much-abused precept of the Jesuits, that “the end justifies the means.”

Our post-office had, of course, a receiving and a delivery compartment; we had a letter-box and a franking-window open to all comers; but we had besides a large provision of ready-made letters, purporting to come from distant regions—the more distant the better—from inland and from beyond seas—the postage of which was charged upon the heavy tariff laid by all countries in those days long before Rowland Hill’s scheme for a uniform penny postage came into operation.

To create a demand for such letters, it was necessary to give them flavour and piquancy, and it was to that scope that our energies were turned in the Percys' drawing-room. We were expected to have the right thing for any one who might call for his correspondents' letters, at our office windows. We had to guess who would be likely to apply for them, and to season them so as to suit his peculiar tastes and meet his peculiar circumstances; and as the bazaar lasted three days, and the office was to remain open all day, those to whom we handed letters had full time to throw their answers into the box; when it became our task in many instances to sit up at night till a late hour to concoct the replies.

In a small community like that of Cambridge, where we all knew each other, where every man's house looked into his neighbour's garden, and the tastes and foibles, the joys and sorrows, the loves and hatreds of private life were public property, we found it easy to play Asmodeus' part, to unroof all dwellings, and open Momus' window between every man's or woman's ribs. We could amuse ourselves as we wrote, as if we had been at a masked ball, puzzling and *intriguing* all we met by showing how well we knew all about them, while we challenged them to find out aught about us.

The letters were in some instances anonymous, some were merely signed with initials, in others the signature was disguised under some anagram easily deciphered, or instead of the pretended writer's name some surname or nickname was given by which he was or could easily be made known. We had every specimen of handwriting at our disposal, for we pressed even the cook and housemaid into our service as amanuenses, and the two ladies were perfect mistresses of all manners of composition ; Mrs. Percy excelling in every variety of lofty or familiar, inflated or slipshod epistolary style, while her sister Harriett tried the witty and humorous, indulging in wagggeries and drolleries, in squibs and epigrams, the point of which was blunted by an adroit admixture of *naïve* and graceful, girlish or kittenish, nonsense.

It was especially as an auxiliary to Miss Milner's lively quizzing and bantering that I found employment. Not a few of Mrs. Percy's epistles were in verse ; high-strained poetical effusions, some of them models of taste and sense. Miss Harriett's pleasantries were also not unfrequently versified, but she made choice of quaint, loose measures and far-fetched, impossible rhymes, *à la* Hudibras, or *à la* Ingoldsby, adding to the pungency

of her jests the charm of vanquished difficulties and successful *tours de force*.

How hard we toiled at our task, and with what zest ! And verily we had our reward. A wonderful hit was our post-office, and heartily we enjoyed the "fun" which we served out to our customers. More money was poured into our till than was lavished on any other branch of business at the bazaar. Morning and evening for three days we had a jostling crowd at our windows. Our letters were snatched from hand to hand, large extracts from them were read out aloud amid roars of laughter, the readers being equally ready to make themselves merry at their own or at their neighbour's expense. A few of them, to be sure, laughed from the wrong corners of their mouths, and some laughed not at all, but after a mere glance at the packet of which they had hastily broken the seal, they would fold or crumple up the paper as if not worth reading, or thrust it into their pocket, endeavouring to look blank and disappointed, and vexed with their lazy correspondents who "had evidently forgotten them and allowed the mails to arrive without even a line to their address."

These, however, were but an insignificant minority.

The generality seemed heartily delighted with what had fallen to their share, and our jokes were bandied about as "excellent;" some of them perhaps rather sharp and cutting, but none ill-natured or unbecoming, nothing that could fall heavier than a mere rap with a lady's fan; everything to be taken as a mere piece of carnival frolic. Some of Miss Harriett's *bons-mots* were deemed so good as to be quoted in print, and made the tour of the press of the Union, from the *Boston Daily Evening Transcript* to the *New Orleans Picayune*.

Forty-six years have passed since that memorable ladies' fair. How many of the sellers and buyers at its stalls are now living? How many of the survivors harbour any remembrance of its transactions? How many of the dearly-purchased gewgaws there treasured up as keepsakes, how many of the scraps of letters, then so popular, could now be produced? Who shall say? For my own part, distance, the lapse of years and the frequent change of scene, the habit of tearing up all lumbering old papers, and an invincible disinclination to keep a journal, or to take note of current events or passing thoughts, to help a retentive faculty at no time very lucid, and now waxing dimmer and dimmer—every circumstance has conspired to reduce all remi-

niscences to a mere haze, out of which the bare phantoms of the past glimmer in hopeless confusion.

I ought to be heartily ashamed to confess that, with all the interest I took in our post-office, and with all my admiration of its fair amateur clerks and managers, I could not now recall a single line of the two sisters' prose or verse, and that, on the contrary, so perverse is the nature of memory, so little under our control, so apt to retain what it ought to dismiss, and to drop what it ought to hold fast, that a few lines of my own composition, out of many which I could not now recall for my life, still, in very spite of myself, linger in the archives of my brain.

They are, I warn the reader, the merest doggerel, too silly for any man to avow, and only remarkable for their egregious absurdity; and if I now write them down it is only to show what liberties we allowed ourselves with our acquaintances, what personalities would pass as good jokes under the mask of anonymous correspondence, and also to give some idea of the degree of proficiency that practice of versification had enabled me to attain in my English after little more than six months' residence among an English-speaking people; for it is true that we should dabble in verse in order to learn to write prose.

The first of these short squibs was addressed to J—L—, a dapper professor of some branch of the philosophical course, whose too obvious advances to a well-known Boston beauty, Miss J—S— (I use only initials, for the persons thus alluded to, though by this time more than sixty or seventy, may still be living), were thought to be particularly distasteful, but who would take no denial, and came again and again to the charge, and was heard to say that “where women were concerned, what could not be had by opportunity should be won by importunity.” The lines ran as follows :

“Oh, give it up, Professor ;
Give it up, Professor Joe !
If Jane won’t have you, bless her,
Why should you plague her so ?
Your suit, you fond adorer,
But wastes your night and day ;
For if you simply *bore* her,
What can you get but *Nay* ?”

The other piece was handed to a young Southern student, a gallant, gay Lothario, who, brought up on a Carolina plantation, and accustomed to look on the mulatto and quadroon slave-girls in his mother’s household as a kind of domestic game, probably deemed himself entitled to the same privileges in his behaviour to the free and independent “helps” in the respectable

New England boarding-house where he lived, and was seen by some of his Puritan neighbours as he attempted to snatch something from the landlady's pretty house-maid, a liberty which this latter, perceiving that she was overlooked, requited by a sonorous slap in the face. To this imprudent as well as immoral libertine, the post conveyed the following admonition :

“ There is no law I heard or saw,
Forbids to kiss a maid, Florindo ;
But it would be, it seems to me,
Good policy to shut the window.
For many a lark with damsels dark,
You were well known to be courageous ;
But here, I ween, when they are seen,
A kiss will make our maids rampageous.”

The success of these mere tomfooleries far exceeded our most sanguine expectations, and was sufficient to make us popular for the remainder of the academical year. Some of those verses, strangely parodied and applied to a variety of new subjects, were pressed into the service of those walking black singers, who were already the rage in the United States, and were presently, under the various names of “Ethiopian Serenaders,” “Christy’s Minstrels,” and the like, to make their way into Old England. Two of my above-quoted lines, with slight modification,

“ Oh, take your time, Professor ;
Take your time, Professor Joe.”

were eternally dinned into our ears under our windows, together with "Jump, Jim Crow," "Jim along, Joey," and other favourite burdens of negro melody. But, in the meanwhile, it was something to have my name mentioned in the same breath as that of Mrs. Percy and Miss Milner, those two bright sisters whose talents were as fully and universally appreciated as their rare good looks. And many were they who envied me the privilege of basking in their smiles, a privilege which was indeed a reward out of proportion with my pœy services.

My intercourse with those ladies, after the bazaar, was not, for that year, of long duration. The New England climate, which had swathed us in snow and ice during several months of an almost polar winter, was soon to choke us in the sultry atmosphere of an almost tropical summer. From numbing cold to stifling heat there seemed to be but one step, so damp and windy and fickle was the season which the almanack put down as spring. It was soon full time for the long vacation. From July to November there was silence and loneliness, both round the wooden buildings or "Bays," as they were called, of Harvard College, and along the corridors and class-rooms of Dr. Marx's Young Ladies' Academy, which was still my home. Most of the professors'

families were thinking of a flitting. Some were off to the Saratoga springs; some to the sea-baths at Nahant or Newport; others to the gay hotels and boarding-houses on the Hudson; others again to the farm-houses and rich orchards of Vermont and New Hampshire. The Percy ladies were among the first to go. And I was left behind—alone.

Alone, however, I have never found existence unendurable. My business as a private teacher had, of course, fallen away from me. But I had at all times a frugal mind; plain, inexpensive habits, and a saving disposition; making hay while the sun shone, and laying up a provision for a rainy day. I could well afford a few days' rest, and was not sorry to be rid of the drudgery. As to company, I had plenty of books; the librarians of Harvard College and of the Boston Athenæum, both my friends, supplying me with the utmost liberality, free of expense. And I have always found my pleasantest companions rather among the dead than the living—rather among writers than talkers; for your greatest genius is sure to put his best foot foremost when he takes pen in hand; and there is also this advantage, that when an author becomes flat or obscure, or from any cause unentertaining, one can always, without incurring the charge of incivility, bid

him "shut up." Argue with him, of course, you cannot, unless by a great effort of imagination you conjure up his ghost, and laugh or weep with, or swear at him, as he chances to meet your views, or to shock your convictions.

I was from early youth a near-sighted man, which meant my eyes were the best for desk-work, and I could read or write hour after hour by daylight or lamplight in my arm-chair or in an express railway train without knowing what fatigue was. What a season that was too for reading, that of 1837 ! Besides the *De Omnibus Rebus et quibusdam aliis*, with which my American Encyclopædia was making me familiar, had I not Walter Scott, whom we in Italy in our boyhood called "the Ariosto of the North," but with whom I came now into a more intimate acquaintance than I had ever been able to do through Barbieri's or Borsieri's Italian translations? Had we not "Marmion," and "Ivanhoe," and "The Bride of Lammermoor," of whom I suggested the theme and laid the plan for an opera to Donizetti ? And had we not "Maltravers," and "Venetia," and "Pickwick," and the pick and choose of English novels in their American reprints with the very bloom of novelty upon them ? Had we not Carlyle's "French Revolution," fresh from

the publisher's hands, and Macaulay's essays in *The Edinburgh Review*, and his "Lays of Ancient Rome," and his "Moncontour" and "Ivry"?

Had there been only one poor sixpennyworth of genius in my brain, what new and vast sphere of intellectual life would those books have opened before it! what glorious flood of light would have overspread it! what genial warmth, what teeming power it would have elicited! what seeds of great ideas would have been sown! what creative energies would have been called into action!

But, alas! what avails it to cudgel one's brain, if "your dull ass will not mend his pace with beating"? It is not by any amount of goodwill and diligence, not by hard reading, or even by some average faculty of appreciating what we read that our mind can add one cubit or one inch to its stature. It is not by flapping its short wings that the ostrich can raise himself and soar into space, emulous of the eagle.

The mind not, perhaps, but what of the heart? Could any words of mine express the infinite good that all that reading did me? Could I ever do justice to the sound, bracing, purifying influence my introduction to the treasures of that living English literature exercised upon my moral character? What a healthy

tone of feeling! What earnest thoughts and generous aspirations! What sober views of the aims and duties of life were awakened! What new, and as I would fain flatter myself, better being was created within me!

Only four years before, in July and August, 1833, as I well remembered, I had been in the South of France, sweltering in an equally oppressing summer heat, with no other diet than three daily penny rolls and water, and no other occupation than lying on my back from morning to evening and reading French books.

It fell out so: By a flagrant abuse of arbitrary power, and under a most flimsy and false pretext that the presence of a few Italian political exiles in Corsica might cause some umbrage to the Tuscan and Roman police, several inoffensive strangers were served with a thundering decree of the French authorities, bidding them leave the Island at a moment's notice. For my part, I was seized by the gendarmes in my bed at an early hour in the morning, compelled to dress in five minutes, and hustled on board the steam-packet *Liamone*, just as that vessel was weighing anchor, bound to Toulon; where considerable time elapsed before I could send for my luggage and for the remittances

of my family and friends; and whilst I was awaiting an answer to my application for a passport to turn my back on a country that was treating me with so outrageous a breach of the commonest rules of hospitality.

Having nothing better to do I lay on my back in the shade, as I said, and read. But what had I to read? It was “the golden age” of Louis Philippe’s reign: the best days of Victor Hugo and Balzac, Eugéne Sue and Paul de Kock, Georges Sand, Jules Janin and Alexandre Dumas. The world rates these writers now at their just value, and sees the results of their teaching in the conditions of the public and private life of the French Republic. To these poets, novelists, and dramatists, and to the historian Thiers, decidedly the greatest romancer of the whole tribe, there is no doubt that the worst faults of the modern character of their countrymen must in sheer justice be signally ascribed. It is from these writers, to whom it would be impossible to deny the gift of the rarest fertility and versatility of genius, that the French caught their rampant Chauvinism; their dog-in-the-manger jealousy; their vaingloriousness, self-conceit and arrogance; their inordinate love of change; their eagerness to carve out for themselves a short cut

to fortune, their proneness to prostrate themselves before success, however achieved ; their want of faith in God and man ; their sneering contempt for whatever is most sacred in domestic ties and family life. Surely never has the world seen a more deplorable combination of brilliant intellects, instinctively, as it were, and unconsciously conspiring to deprave and debase a nation naturally high-spirited, upright, and generous, by pandering to its worst propensities, and kindling their most dangerous passions. Never has there been a more lamentable downfall in taste as well as in morals than that which led from the "Notre Dame" of 1830 to the "Assommoir" and "Nana" of 1880.

The transition from the high-seasoned garbage of this half century of French literature to the plain and perhaps slow diet furnished by the English writers of the early days of Queen Victoria's reign, had upon me the effect of a second mental and moral baptism, a thoroughly purifying and regenerating process. And so beneficial was the general discipline undergone at that crisis by my mind and body that it has never since happened to me to take up a book or even a newspaper in the French language without a feeling of invincible repugnance and almost loathing. And I have never

ceased to regret and lament the strange fascination which French literature seems to exercise, not only upon the people of Latin blood, Italian or Spanish, but even on men of Teutonic descent, German or English, who cannot, like the Italians or Spaniards, plead in their exculpation the scantiness of their own national literature or the affinity of language—a Frenchified taste pervading and tainting almost every style of writing, but especially the drama and romance, throughout Europe. Of this deplorable tendency to a servile imitation of French productions a flagrant instance we have in the novels of “Ouida,” a writer half French, half English by parentage, and more than half French by her early education and initiation into social life. Of her it may be said, that if the pen be English the thought that set it to work is merely a caricature of the very worst thought that ever swarmed in a disordered French brain. That we should see to what condition France has been reduced by her moral as well as by her political development, and yet that we—all of us Europeans—should insist on meanly borrowing her ideas of government and her style of writing—as we do her fashions of dress and furniture—is to me the most inexplicable and inconceivable marvel.

The only diversion from my all-engrossing pursuits

that I allowed myself during that summer and autumn, was a short trip across part of the State of Massachusetts, and that was undertaken at the suggestion of my kind friend and hostess Mrs. Marx, who feared that my incessant poring over books might bring about brain-fever. She strongly advised me to accompany David Marx, her husband, who was about to set out for Amherst, there to attend a grand conference of all the schoolmasters of New England, anxious to devise the means of extending the limits of female education throughout the United States.

Amherst is a little provincial town, at that time with a population of about 2600 souls, lying at a distance of eighty-two miles from Boston in a north-westerly direction. It is a kind of rustic Cambridge, with a young men's college and a young ladies' academy, both institutions dating from 1821, and mainly differing from Harvard University and its dependencies in this, that, while Harvard was the stronghold of Unitarianism, a religious persuasion which, in the absence of a Dominant Church in the Union, is, or was then, the fashionable establishment—Amherst, and other seats of knowledge, scattered here and there about the provinces of the same State of Massachusetts, belonged to a variety of dissenting sects, all, however, known

under the same name of “Congregationalists,” and professing to look upon all members of their various denominations as brethren and Christians, their only exception concerning the Roman Catholics, whom they stigmatised as “Pagans,” and the Unitarians, whom they denounced as “Rationalists,” both of whom they, therefore, excluded from their communion.

Every incident in that short excursion is so blurred and muddled in my recollection that I might almost feel tempted to set it down as a mere dream. I have only a vague notion that the journey began by rail—that we went on by coach, and ended by hiring a ramshackle vehicle, which my friend Marx called a “buggy,” drawn by a long-legged black old brute which should never have been put to anything but a hearse.

At our journey’s end was Amherst, with its straggling college buildings and an open space between them, where we found an assembled crowd of clerical-looking men in rusty and in some instances threadbare black, through the midst of whom we made our way to a venerable-looking elderly gentleman with long white locks, to whom I was presented as a “distinguished stranger, an Eye-talian,” and with whom after the exchange of a few civil words, imperfectly

understood on either side, conversation had to be given up as altogether impracticable and unprofitable.

Presently I was led into a large whitewashed room, with a gallery on two of its sides, an organ loft at one end, and on the other a raised platform, on which the same white-haired gentleman, backed by some of his colleagues, the Amherst professors, was holding forth to the same rusty crowd, all standing up at the tail of a row of long benches crammed with women, old and young, but all showily attired; and a few hours later I sat in the same room at a long table with some two hundred of the rusty men above-mentioned, and the same white-haired gentleman at the head of it; the table groaning under the weight of huge joints of boiled pork, with beans and squash and cranberry sauce, and other delicacies of New England fare; the banquet preceded by a long grace, and followed by longer thanksgivings; while the female company, in their showy dresses, stood idly looking down on the busy guests from the gallery, and from the organ-loft there burst forth the occasional peal of thundering notes which may equally have been the Dead March in "Saul" or the "Battle of Prague."

To make up for the dulness of that pedagogic

meeting and the weariness of the journey out, we changed our line of route on our way home. We made a rambling tour in our buggy, passing many a neat little town and village on the Connecticut River. We stopped at a place of which I now vainly try to recall the name, a place standing on the bank of a stream, and between two steep conical hills, one called Mount Holyoke—which I ascended—the other's name, for aught I remember, being Mount Horeb or Sinai; a charming spot, which may have suggested to Wendell Holmes the scene of his “Elsie Venner”—the western town at the foot of the *Maountin*, with the dreadful Snake's-croft on its crest big with the fate of the weird heroine.

New England is a comparatively old-settled community. There is nothing wild or primeval in her scenery; no grand natural features with which a traveller may fall into raptures; but there is enough in the freshness and healthiness of the land, in its tidy though primitive cultivation, and in its peaceful domestic look of general contentment to more than reconcile one to its tameness, even in its everyday dress of spring and summer. But it must be seen, as we then saw it, when its foliage has put on its gorgeous though evanescent autumn garb, when the

whole landscape is glowing with the deep crimson, the vivid gold, and all the endless variety of rich tints, which no artist could venture to convey to his canvas, with a view to produce it at an European exhibition, without suggesting a doubt as to the soundness of his visual organs or the sanity of his perceptive faculties.

CHAPTER VIII.

A TURN IN THE TIDE.

dr^k to Cambridge—A distinguished visitor—An unexpected proposal
—American lecturing—Lecturers and spectators—A mock lecture
—Lecturing in earnest—Lions in the path—A memorable
W evening—A serious lecture—The matter—The manner—Writing
and reading—The ordeal—The result—Doomed to appear in
print—A new acquaintance—Ladies' schemes—A bright winter
night—A cold night walk.

ON the 7th of October, 1837, the anniversary of my first landing in New York, I was again at home in my turret above the attic floor of David Marx's young ladies' academy, seated in my arm-chair before my writing-desk, and surrounded by my well-filled book-shelves, when an early morning visitor was announced.

The little town or village of Cambridge, half-a-mile off, barely visible through its almost leafless cluster of trees, was rapidly recovering its usual inhabited appearance. The blinds were up at the windows of many of the dwellings in Professors' Row. The doors

of the library and of some of the museums, freshened and sweetened by several days' application of soap and water, stood invitingly open. A few of the students, anxious to secure the best rooms in anticipation of the forthcoming winter term, were crossing the open space, between the two great college buildings ; an open space which, although between parallels, could still, strictly speaking, hardly be described as a square, and was not even, though it was often improperly so called, a quadrangle—exchanging friendly greetings as they met, and gathering here and there in little knots their joyous talk betraying no symptoms of the homesickness against which at least some of the freshmen might be presumed to be struggling. Along the streets and avenues leading to the college, ladies and young ladies were flitting backwards and forwards, bound on their morning shopping ; recent arrivals, most of them, from the springs or the sea, their blooming cheeks and elastic steps bearing witness to the virtues of the waters and the breezes to which they had repaired for the benefit of their jaded health.

My visitor was one whom I had often seen and to whom I had been formally introduced, yet with whom I was not as yet on terms of intimate acquaintance. It was Henry Ware, jun., a professor of some

branch of the theological faculty, a D.D., and a distinguished orator both in chair and pulpit ; and co-editor with Professor Palfrey of the *North American Review*.

He was a man of low stature with a broad square back, hale and strong-knit in every limb ; his face was dark with straight angular features and a projecting heavy chin—a countenance which somehow reminded me of the picture Walter Scott's illustrators have drawn of the Black Dwarf.

Under this not very prepossessing exterior, Dr. Ware hid an earnest and active, benevolent disposition ; his zeal especially prompting him to be on the look-out for any rising talent among the college students with a view to encourage and promote it. This praiseworthy, charitable instinct in one so eminent was not common among his learned colleagues of Harvard College.

He was, he told me, a member of the committee charged with the management of the course of lectures to be delivered during the winter at the Cambridge Town Hall, and he "made bold" to address me, as a resident near the town, begging to be allowed to write down my name among the lecturers "on some subject of which he would leave me the choice."

I was too utterly thunderstruck by surprise to be,

aware of the honour the good professor intended to me, and to thank him for it. Had the proposal come from anybody else I should have felt inclined to resent it as a silly jest, but with a man of his character such a supposition was out of the question. I answered, very gravely, that I was at a loss to imagine who could have given him the idea that I could serve him in the capacity he mentioned. "My experience as yet," I said, "has been limited to private tuition; I give lessons, not lectures."

"Pardon me," he replied, "I have been privileged to read, and I have here in my hand something of yours that is not only a lecture, but a lecture on lecturing. Your essay has shown us, if not what lecturing should be, at least what it should not be." He smiled slyly at my evident confusion, and continued: "I trust you will acquit Mrs. Percy of indiscretion if she has put into my hands what you, perhaps, only intended for her private perusal. But your manuscript, she knew, was safe with me. Here it is, and without your permission it will go no further."

It was true; I had in an idle moment, when bored to distraction by some of the droning lecturers to whom, for the sake of company, I had doomed myself to listen evening after evening throughout the previous season,

indulged a passing whim to parody and caricature the style of some of the heavier orators. I had made free with their personal appearance, their voice and gesture; I had described the pompousness and solemnity with which they retailed their stale truisms and flat commonplaces; the dulness with which they threw in their ponderous jokes; the trash they made of their history, moral philosophy, political economy, and what they called "sociology;" the threadbare sentimentalism; the bombastic appeals to the patriotic, humanitarian, or utilitarian feelings of their audience; the intolerable deal of fustian and clap-trap, in short, in which their pennyworth of sense was too frequently involved.

After this unceremonious treatment of the chief performers on the platform, I turned to the spectators, a name, I said, better fitting them than that of hearers, for it was to see rather than to hear, to be amused rather than instructed, that most of them came, and if the lecture had nothing of what they considered "fun" in it, they would have it at the lecturer's or at each other's expense. I took a survey of the dames and damsels, who constituted the majority present, especially on the front rows, commenting on their eager faces, on their settled determination to look wise, to show that their real purpose was the

improvement of their minds, and I noticed how, as the lecture went on, unless some supreme intellect or transcendent wit—say an Everett or an Emerson—cast the magic spell of his name upon them, unless a chemist or natural philosopher lighted up his subject with the blue lights and red fires of electricity or magnetism, or a geologist or mineralogist handed round shells or corals, gold nuggets and other specimens to keep their curiosity on the stretch—I noticed, I say, how if the lecture was mere prose their attention would flag. I noticed with what difficulty they would smother a yawn; what weary vacant look would steal over their faces, how their eyes would wander, first up at the ceiling, then at their neighbour's scarf or mantle, whence their thoughts would naturally turn to their own attire, and they would smooth down a ringlet, open the fur-tippets about their necks for air, wriggle slightly on their chair for an easier or more picturesque posture; finally, when quite satisfied about what they owed to themselves, they would venture on a sly whisper; they would, especially if screened by the tall bonnets or turbans of the blue stockings before them, engage in a quiet undertone chat, a few innocent bits of town gossip, or, more naturally, of æsthetic strictures on the lecturer—who,

if aged and plain, was “such a *dear old quiz* with his bald pate and goggle eyes, and the treble pipe of his cracked voice”—or, if young and handsome, “such a *duck of a man* with such charming lisp, and long, smooth, ambrosial whiskers” (for long beard and moustaches were at that time a great abomination), and “such dear little hands with taper fingers as white as the fine cambric pocket-handkerchief which he so frequently and so bewitchingly drew across his highly intellectual brow!” For, be it remembered, nowhere in the world do women, old or young, privately or openly, discuss and comment upon men’s personal appearance as do those of emancipated Yankeeland.

That mock-lecture of mine, as may be easily perceived, was only a silly but harmless little bit of satire, intended for the strictly private diversion of intimate friends; and it was suggested by my wonder at the fondness for lectures evinced by the people amongst whom I lived. For my Italian prejudices were still very strong within me, and I could not help thinking that, if the purpose of these lectures was to combine instruction with amusement, surely the aim could hardly be as well attained by a desultory series of essays on disconnected subjects written by men of often divergent and sometimes even conflictir-

views, as it would be by the drama or the opera, either of which might be preferable, not merely as a literary and artistic production, but also as a means of drowning by its noise any chat, banter, or flirtation which it might be desirable to encourage among the spectators.

I took the manuscript from the hands that tendered it, half-blushing and half-laughing as I asked :

“ Surely, sir, you would not wish me to deliver such a lecture as this before your Cambridge audience ? ”

“ Not this, my young friend,” he answered, also smiling ; “ but one as good as this. This only proves how well you can write if you have a mind to do so. Mrs. Percy tells me you hardly spoke or understood a word of English when you first called upon her with her brother a twelvemonth ago. You will not think me a flatterer if I tell you that I think you have made the best of your time. Understand me,” he added after a brief pause, seeing that I cast down my eyes and looked sheepish ; “ I do not mean to say that the English of this manuscript is perfect. There may be here and there some slight word that needs correction ; but this I maintain, that you have acquired a mastery over our language that seems to

me surprising; and that I find in your manner something quaint and outlandish, maybe, but not un-English; some happy turn of your Latin phrase into our Saxon idiom, by which you almost seem to teach us our English, and to find in it what we would vainly seek in it ourselves."

It may be easily believed that such words from such a man, called up a flush of colour on my cheeks. But I gulped down the emotion of gratified vanity that was rising in my breast, and answered without affected humility:

" You are very kind, I am sure, and it is not for me to challenge your judgment. I cannot deny that I have given my English all the attention I could command, and necessity is the best mistress—but, admitting even that I could, by taking pains and soliciting some friend's revision, get up an essay in sufficiently correct and decent English, how could I muster an accent that would make me intelligible? I can tell you that I hardly ever address a street porter, a housemaid, or even the postman, to ask my way, without being met by a blank stare, and a '*Me no parlévous.*'"

He laughed. "I confess you have not caught the pure Doric of our lower classes yet; perhaps you neve-

will catch it; and it will be no great harm to you if you don't. But the kind of audience you will address at our Town Hall have more experienced ears. Many of them have travelled. Most of them have studied Latin or French, if not Italian. Your speech is sufficiently distinct though peculiar. If you read slowly and calmly I have no doubt we shall be able to follow you."

I had nothing to answer, and he went on :

"What you can give us and what we want is novelty. Our audience, especially the feminine part of it, must have something to awaken their interest. Our lecturers are apt to get into the common groove, both as to their subjects and as to their way of illustrating them. There will be something in your favour in the mere fact that you come from the other side of the water. Our own men when they return from their travels always look as if they had added many an inch to their height. People will expect something new in your matter as well as in your manner."

"Matter ! Manner !" I re-echoed. "How could I even think of a subject ?"

"How could you be at a loss for a subject ?" he broke in, with vivacity. "You, an Italian ! a patriot !

a man, I have no doubt, well versed in the ins and outs, in the past and present of that most interesting of all the old countries——”

“Still, I assure you, nothing occurs to me that would seem at all to the purpose.”

“Allow me! Oblige me! What part of Italy do you belong to?”

“I am from the north; I was born and brought up in Parma, though not of a Parmesan family.”

“Parma, Parma,” he reflected. “Let me see! Parmesan violets! Parmesan cheese! Correggio’s paintings! Parma, the Latin for a shield. By-the-way, is there not a Grand-duchess of Parma? Is she not the widow——”

“Yes,” I interrupted; “our sovereign lady is styled ‘Maria Louisa, Imperial Princess, Archduchess of Austria; by the Grace of God Duchess of Parma, Piacenza, and Guastalla’; and was once ‘Her Majesty, the Consort of Napoleon the First, Emperor of the French and King of Italy.’ There is no Grand-duke or Grand-duchess in Italy, except he of Tuscany.”

“Is that so? And yet you are hopeless of a subject? My dear young friend! by all means stick to that. Give us something about that imperial lady of yours. Our people like nothing half as well as

gossip about royalty. Give us the Empress as she was and the Duchess as she is, and I make myself answerable for the result."

Little more was said, but I was booked. I promised to have my lecture ready within two months, up to which date the list of orators was filled up; and by the end of the week I had the honour to see my name and my subject printed among the notices in all the Boston newspapers. I need hardly say that I felt bound to exert myself to the utmost. There evidently was a lady in the case. My wise friend, Mrs. Percy, had easily read my inmost heart. Perhaps, also, I wore it more openly on my sleeve than I was aware, or than prudent persons would recommend. She had probably perceived that I fretted against the humbleness of my lot, and had a sufficiently favourable opinion of my abilities to think that I might, under better circumstances, deserve and achieve distinction. And she had prevailed upon Dr. Henry Ware to offer me an opportunity.

My task was by no means a difficult one; for the biography of Maria Louisa, from the date of her birth to that of her marriage, very few words would be required. From her ascent to the throne as Empress of the Great Napoleon to her escape from

the catastrophe which overwhelmed her husband, French history—and especially M. Norvins' “*Histoire de Napoléon*”—would supply ample materials. The work of M. de Ménéval, “*Napoléon et Marie Louise*,” did not appear before 1843; that of M. Lecomte, “*Parme sous Marie Louise*,” as late as 1846. But for the imperial lady's doings as a grass-widow from 1814 to 1821, and as a widow and for the second time a wife, up to the year 1837, the time I was writing, I was as familiar with my subject as any man in America.

I had received no favours at the hands of the empress-duchess; neither did I harbour any ill-will or resentment against her. I had, it is true, been imprisoned by her order in the State fortress of Compiano; I had come out of durance in time to bear a hand in that storm-in-a-teapot of Central Italy in 1831, which had momentarily dethroned and expelled her; and upon her restoration I had been one of the twenty principal offenders whom she excluded from her magnanimous decree of general amnesty. But my enmity was not against her, but against the Austrians, in whose hands she and all the other princes of Italy were no more than mere puppets; and as to any orders or decrees that bore her name,

either before or after that petty, semi-serious revolutionary episode that sent me adrift into the world as a political exile, I knew that she had no more hand in them, or in any other act of her government, than the babe unborn.

The narrative style, the best suited to historical and biographical composition, unless an attempt is made to excessive pomp or superfine elegance, is among the easiest, because it is the least idiomatic, the one in which translation from language to language is least impracticable. I could have no pretension, and felt no inclination, to what is called "fine language," and had always a hearty detestation of *high falutin*. All I aimed at was clearness and neatness, and as I had plenty of time and loved work for work's sake, I tinkered and cobbled at my poor lecture till its language seemed to me to run sufficiently smooth, simple, and natural.

The difficulty lay in the delivery. Consciousness of unconquerable shyness disquieted me; and there were peculiar combinations of English consonants, such as the *w* and *wh*; and still more the *s* after the *th* in *months*, *truths*, etc., to which my Italian teeth and lips positively refused to give utterance. We have also no aspirations in Italian, and do what I

might, I never felt sure that I would not, in an unguarded moment, drop my *h*'s like a cockney. The natural melody and smoothness of our Italian language, besides, rendered it extremely difficult to keep my intonation from falling into a monotonous *cantilena*, or sing-song.

However, I was in for it, and it was too late to draw back. My fair friends of Casa Percy did their best to keep up my spirits, and suffered me to read out to them, by way of practice, whole cantos of "Childe Harold" and the "Lay of the Last Minstrel," till I set their teeth on edge. Every one assured me "my pronunciation was wonderfully good," as they invariably added—"for a foreigner"—and that all I had to take care of was "to read precisely as I spoke."

Well, the eventful evening, the 23rd of December, 1837, came at last, and either the expectation of something new and "funny," or else the strenuous exertions of my well-wishers, had brought together a considerably larger crowd than was usually in attendance at the Town Hall. As I sat on the platform among the members of the committee, and on the right of Henry Ware, their chairman for the evening, I stole a glance at the audience, and though

my near-sighted eyes did not allow me to see very distinctly, I was surprised to be confronted by so few familiar faces, and felt how very limited my acquaintance in the country had hitherto been. Mrs. Percy and her sister Harriett were, of course, in the front seat, and met my glance with encouraging smiles. Behind them was a row of young faces from Mr. Marx's Academy; among the brightest, those of Helen Hurd and Lizzie Baker. My countrymen, Bachi and D'Alessandro, had been good-natured enough to come all the way from Boston to keep me in countenance. On the benches to the right and left of the platform sat several of the professors, Felton, Bowen, Lovering, Longfellow, and others. At the back, the students of Harvard were thronged, many of them standing.

As the clock struck eight, Dr. Ware rose and introduced the lecturer, and named the subject appointed for the evening.

I stood upon my feet, and shuffled them about for a few seconds, turning over the pages of my manuscript. There was a breathless, ominous silence, in the midst of which my voice rose sufficiently distinct and unfaltering to reach even the remotest corners of the Hall :

"Ladies and Gentlemen," I began : "My pur-

pose in addressing you this evening is to give you some account of a great lady who, for a brief space, occupied a prominent position in the European world, one of those actors in life's drama who step upon the stage preceded and followed by all the *prestige* which should only surround the protagonists, but who, when the curtain falls, may be said to have only played the part of mere dummies and supernumeraries in the action."

Here I paused to take breath, and by the time I had come to the end of that first sentence I had recovered sufficient composure to forget my audience and to proceed as if I had been simply reading to myself. Thanks to my near-sightedness and my unwillingness to trust to memory, I had to hold up the written pages close to my face, and what was out of my sight gradually vanished from my mind.

The lecture went on at a fair pace with little change in the tenor of my voice, no attempt at impassioned emphasis or pointed accentuation, all smooth and plain, and somewhat monotonous, risking nothing for mere effect. All my faculties were engaged in keeping so firm a control over the nerves as to prevent any diversion of the mind from the task before it, and to exclude any thought of the severe ordeal I was under-

going, or any eagerness to escape from, by hurrying through it.

My mentor, Henry Ware, had recommended calmness and slowness. And I felt that as long as I was slow I must at least appear calm. Unfortunately, some one behind me kept whispering every moment, "A little louder!" "Not so fast!" and these ill-timed hints had a contrary result to what was intended. They only disconcerted and caused me to scamper on rather too hastily towards the end.

My audience's behaviour was beyond all praise. Friendly and sympathetic as it was intelligent, and patient from beginning to end. There were no outbursts of enthusiastic applause, no movement betraying deep sensation or uncontrollable emotion, as indeed it was neither my object, nor was there anything in my theme or in my style to call forth the expression of very lively feeling. But I was listened to in unbroken silence and with unflagging attention. The interest my hearers might not feel in the subject of the lecture was evidently shown in the person of the lecturer, who, as a foreigner, and battling, as it were, with the mere rudiments of the language (never then or at any later time having opened an English grammar), came before them performing what might be called a *tour de force*, and

deserved as much indulgence and benevolence as one of a showman's "infant prodigies," something like a girl not yet in her teens turning somersaults on the tight rope, or a boy ten years old emulating "Paganini's fiddling on one string."

When all was over there arose a slight fluttering of ladies' fans against their neighbours' chairs, a feeble rattling of gentlemen's canes on the floor, meant, I suppose, as a mild show of approbation. But it was at the best an abortive attempt, and went no farther. Somehow, however, there seemed to be no disposition to rush from the hall, the usual symptom of an audience wearied beyond endurance. They all stood up in their places; some gathering in groups and commenting, not unfavourably, in as far as they were audible, on what they had heard; but most of them pressing forward to and on the platform; friends taking me by both hands, strangers soliciting an introduction, nearly all with something to say about the "treat" (such was the word) they had had that last hour. There was, in short, an "ovation," as the morning papers described it in the account they gave of it on the morrow. But it was a very quiet affair. No one had been enraptured or electrified; but, on the other hand, no one was altogether dissatisfied. They had had their money's-

worth in the gratification of their curiosity, and none of those whose opinion I had reason to value—Judge Story, Mr. and Mrs. Andrews Norton, and many of the professors—hung back, or was chary of some kind word of congratulation or encouragement.

In the midst of the little hubbub inseparable from the going asunder even of the best-behaved assemblage, my friend, Dr. Henry Ware, made his way through the crowd to the platform, followed by Professor Palfrey, and came up to me just as I was taking up my hat, gloves, and stick, and pointing to the roll of my manuscript, which was still lying on the table, he said :

“Would you please to place your lecture again in my hands for a few days? Here is Professor Palfrey, my good colleague and my co-editor, who wishes—as I also would wish—to see that lecture in print in *The North American Review*. Have you any objection to it?”

I was too much taken aback by this unexpected proposal to find a ready answer; but my friend, of course, ascribing my perplexity to an overpowering sense of the honour that was intended, chose to interpret my silence as assent to his desire, and simply nodded his thanks, adding: “The January number

of our Review is already in print, and your article will have to stand over till April. It will come out with the violets and the primroses, the daffodils, and every sweet thing with which the new season will bless us."

With this he departed, taking with him his friend and my lecture, leaving me still half-dumbfounded, unable to realise the fact that my English writing was already deemed good enough to appear before the world in the very best company that the "great guns" of American literature could afford. Meanwhile the crowd had become thin enough to allow me to think of an exit. As I was threading my way through the feminine part of the crowd who were waiting in the lobby for their male friends, I heard a voice behind me, saying: "There he is, pray introduce me." And, on turning, I saw Mrs. Percy and her sister, and with them another lady, a stranger to me, to whom Mrs. Percy introduced me, naming her as Mrs. Rufus Kingsley, of Cincinnati, Ohio.

There were a few flattering words about the lecture, as a matter of course, and a question or two about some points relating to the subject, which required explanation; after which, as we were leaving the Hall, and the ladies parting at the door had to walk in different directions, the strange lady, who appa-

rently was unattended, asked if I did not think that we might improve our acquaintance by my escorting her home.

I was "too happy" of course, and when we came to her door, I was also "delighted" to step in and take tea with her and her young students. We found, as we went in, these two young gentlemen in the drawing-room, who had just preceded us, coming from the lecture-room, and whom she presented as her sons, Rufy and Henry. These youngsters, after tea had come in and had been removed, left me *tête-à-tête* with the lady.

Mrs. Rufus Kingsley, as I had heard, though I had never before seen her, was a widow lady, who had come to Cambridge at the beginning of the college term, in October, and who had soon taken up a high position in our little social circle, being preceded by the fame of her husband, the Honourable Rufus Kingsley, who had been a leading statesman, both in his native State of Ohio, and in the Senate and Cabinet at Washington, but who had been prematurely cut off by death in the midst of his brilliant career. His widow, left alone with those two sons, had attended with the utmost care to their education in their paternal house at Cincinnati, and

had now come eastwards and settled with them in Cambridge, in a dame's lodging and boarding-house, where they were to study the law under Judge Story, their father's friend, and under the other professors of the law faculty.

Rufus Kingsley, the oldest son, was more than twenty years of age. It was, therefore, natural to presume that his mother was bordering on the close of her eighth lustre. But she was tall and stately, with a splendid complexion, a great wealth of dark brown hair, and a brow to grace a diadem. In her evening dress and by lamplight she was still entitled to the boast of a striking beauty. There were no crows-feet under her large gray eyes, no appearance of excessive portliness interfering with the perfect symmetry and elegance of her magnificent figure.

She sat on a low stool by the fire, and bade me draw up my chair closer to her. She talked volubly and freely about many things. About Italy; about the Pope whom she called Mumbo-Jumbo; about her sons, about Harvard College, about the Yankees, whom she, as a good Western woman, held in sovereign contempt, etc. Finally giving an abrupt turn to the conversation, she came to the lecture of the evening, and asked me to show her the manuscript.

"Sorry I have not got it, madam," said I. "It is in Dr. Ware's hands." Then with a silly smile of mock-modesty, I added : "I should have thought that any one who had heard that lecture would have had enough of the infliction—at least if my foreign accent allowed him to understand what he heard."

"Ha ! you are fishing for compliments, now," she said. "You shall have none from me. I aspire to be a friend and cannot, therefore, be a flatterer. It is true, my son Henry declared he could not catch one syllable ; but I followed you word by word."

I bowed and thanked, and she went on :

"We have had a long talk about you with Mrs. Percy, and it was that which took me to the Town Hall. You have made a hit this evening—and you know it. But, allow me frankly to tell you, you have made your best of the very worst subject ; Maria Louisa was a worthless woman—a disgrace to woman-kind. She had not even that poor last virtue which is so very seldom wanting in one of her sex, that makes a wife, well or ill mated, stick to her husband when he is down. Had she run away with one of the Emperor's chamberlains, or even one of his grooms —when he was at the height of his fortunes—there

might have been some excuse for her; but to forsake him in his hour of adversity! Pah! The wife of one of your Sicilian brigands will follow him to the foot of the scaffold, as true as the Virgin Mary. But the world has judged the ex-empress, and it was not of her I was thinking now—Mrs. Percy and I have been laying some plan about you. She thinks highly of you; takes a strong interest in your welfare—and so do I. You have made a hit this evening, I repeat. The papers will tell you so to-morrow morning. It is the tide in your affairs which must be taken at the flood. We wish you to be a lecturer—a lecturer in good earnest. We will give you better themes—we will advise you—help you. There are worse careers in this country than that of a lecturer, and let me tell you, it is only with women's help that any man can get on in America."

She had been talking at a great rate and I had never dreamt of interrupting her. And now when she stopped to take breath, I was not ready with an answer, so she continued:

"It is late now—and I see—you are tired—you must be tired. This is not the moment to enter into particulars of our ladies' scheme. We want to set

up a class of ladies and young ladies—gentlemen not excluded—for whose instruction you will lecture on the history and literature of your country. You will deliver your course of lectures here in Cambridge; you will repeat them in Boston. You will carry them throughout the Union, not forgetting dear old Cincinnati. But about all that to-morrow. Be so good as to call here at eight to-morrow evening. You will find here Mrs. Percy and her sister Harriett. We will discuss the business at full length. Mrs. Percy and her sister are great friends of yours, and how handsome the elder is! and the younger how pretty! and how clever both! I declare you are the luckiest of mortals. I wonder which of the two you love best."

So saying, and smiling with a sly, half-malicious look, she rose, and I took the hint. I shook the hand that she held out to me and was half-tempted to kiss it. But I thought better of it in time, and backed out of the room, the lady following me a few steps to the door, repeating: "To-morrow evening, at eight. Do not forget." To which I answered: "Never fear, I never forget."

In the entrance I found the lady's younger son,

Henry, looking very sleepy, holding his study-lamp to light me out, and who closed the house-door after me with a shivering "Good-night."

Outside the air was bitter cold, but there was all the brightness of a New England winter. It was not far from midnight. I walked briskly along the foot-path on my way home to Dr. Marx's, the hard compact snow which lay deep on the ground breaking up into a shining silver dust as I crunched it with my boots. My eyes ran up to the blazing starry vault, and descried Sirius, now southing on the meridian, Sirius my favourite star, because the biggest and brightest; my guardian star, as I fancied, whose sphere I trusted I was destined to inhabit in some future life if I continued to be a good boy to the end. There was a briskness in my steps, and a feeling of elation in my heart, such as I had not felt yet since my first landing in America. How could it be otherwise? I was going to see myself in print, and there were three lovely ladies who had my well-being at heart. Unconsciously I repeated Mrs. Kingsley's words: "How handsome this one was, how pretty that other, how clever all of them." Why should I have no faith in me since three such angels cared for me? And I

went back with my memory to those verses of Dante which seemed so admirably to meet the circumstances :

“Dunque, che è ? Perché, perché ristai ?
Perché tanta viltà nel core allette
Perché ardire e franchezza non hai ?
Poscia che tai tre donne benedette
Curan di te nella Corte del Cielo ?” *

“My career,” I continued, “is before me. My fortune made.” Then I stood still for one moment as a thought crossed me. “Career !” I said. “Fortune ! A lecturer’s business, a teacher’s trade ! Is this a hero’s path ? A patriot’s life ? A soldier’s death ? Was this all I was to gain by my voyage across the Atlantic ?”

With these conflicting thoughts alternating between vain confidence and idle repining I reached my home at the Academy, threw myself into my bed, and had a few hour’s dreamless sleep.

* “What is this comes o’er thee, then ?
Why, why dost thou hang back ? Why in thy breast
Harbour vile fear ? Why hast not courage there,
And noble daring ; since three maids, so blest,
Thy safety plan, e’en in the court of heaven ?”

CHAPTER IX.

A FAIR CRITIC.

A New Year's Day—A social *corvée*—The coming trial—Female support—Reasonable hopes—My mentor—Her personal appearance—Her character—My estimate of it—Her religion and mine—Her taste and mine—Convinced against my will—The eve of battle.

WE had a pleasant New Year's Day in New England in 1838. Out of Puritan hatred to the practices of Anglican worship, the Pilgrim Fathers had abolished Christmas as a religious festivity; and whatever there was in that auspicious day of a purely domestic and social character was transferred to the day following a se'nnight later. In their eagerness to substitute French for English manners and usages, the Yankees had introduced the fashion, universal on the Continent, of the interchange of visits of the *jour de l'an*. But the visits were not, as in France, paid by the transmission by post or messengers of little pasteboard

cards. In America all the gentlemen—at least, the young ones—were expected to call personally on all the ladies and young ladies—at least, on those whose acquaintance they valued and wished to keep up; a practice, one may see, that would have been materially impracticable in large cities like Paris or London, but which was still within the limits of possibility in the minor New England communities.

In Cambridge this year, as in Charlestown a twelve-month before, we youngsters had hunted in couples or in bands, the *jolly green* youths being glad to show themselves under the auspices of their less bashful or more popular friends. And for their own part, those of the ladies who had any dread of being overlooked and left alone and disconsolate, clustered together in the drawing-rooms of their more favoured acquaintances, and sat with them in state, ready for the callers from an unconscionably early hour in the morning till absurdly late in the evening.

It may well be imagined that such a custom involved not a little of a *corvée*, at least for the male members of a reasonably extensive social circle. The walking or driving along the streets, and the running up and down stairs were prodigious. Nor had the ladies much rest on their sofas or divans; for they

had to get up and shake hands, every Jill with every Jack, at each new arrival; the intercourse being usually, though not invariably, limited to a "How do?" and "Good-bye!" each of the male parties being expected instantly to give way and make room for the party which followed at its heels.

The mere fagging of all that locomotion would not, however, have been above the power of a man of average health and strength, so long as he had the use of his legs; but the mischief was that the receiving ladies, like so many Circes, had, on a side-board near their sofas, large salvers with decanters of choice wines, chiefly old Madeira, with dishes of cakes and sweetmeats, and a long row of glasses ready filled to the brim, at which all the callers were expected, invited, and pressed to help themselves; and it was held uncourteous and churlish not to have at least a sip at one of these bumpers, the ladies themselves blessing the brim by a slight touch of their lips; for the great purpose of the visits was for the two sexes to wish each other "health and happiness for the in-coming year, with many, many happy returns of the same."

In a mere sip, however, multiplied by ten or by hundred, there might have been no great hardship;

but it so happened that in any lull between the incessant rat-tat of the knocker and the tinkling of the bell at the house door, some privileged party would be allowed to tarry and sit down, when, what with the heat of the walk, and the liveliness of the talk, and the sparkling of bright eyes, and the archness of sweet smiles, and the fumes of that Circean liquor, some of the visitors would so far succumb to the witches' spell as to make swine of themselves ; while those whose temperance and self-command were proof against all seduction, were at least apt to become extremely merry and waggish, their hilarity hardly stopping short of uproariousness.

In all these prolonged entertainments, at least where I was present, my Italian lectures were introduced as a first topic and almost as the event of the day, the ladies kindly wishing me success, and the gentlemen taking it as a matter of course, and celebrating it with many a hip, hip, hooray ! It had been settled by my three lady patronesses that the course should begin the first week in January, that it should go on from week to week, and should consist of twelve lectures. For the first, or introductory, we had appointed the first Saturday after New Year's Day ; and, as it was intended for a mere experiment, it was notified in the newspapers that it

should be freely open to the public, subscriptions to the course being only accepted on the day after its delivery.

Those three lady patronesses of mine had exerted themselves most heroically, and had excited in my behalf an expectation which was as frightening, to say the least, as it was flattering, and might as easily have led to the most disastrous as to the most satisfactory results. They had been unremitting in their calls upon their friends among the most fashionable and influential queens of Boston drawing-rooms. "I should have the whole city in attendance," my New Year's well-wishers assured me. There would be as large a crowd and as much excitement in Cambridge as there was on Commencement Day of Harvard College, or at the celebration of the anniversary of the *Phi Beta Kappa* Association (a learned body set up in emulation of the London Royal Society), when the event of the day was an address delivered by some of the greatest orators in the country, those in my days being such men as Edward Everett and Ralph Waldo Emerson.

There was not much to cheer nor much to depress me in these palpable exaggerations. But I was sufficiently affected by them to consider it incumbent on me, as a duty to the friends who had shown me so

much interest, to do my utmost to avoid actual failure. And I worked all the harder, as my theme was no longer like the one suggested by Dr. Ware, a reigning lady for whom it was impossible to harbour much respect, but a subject which engrossed all my best feelings—love of my country; my wish to exalt her name and uphold her honour, till the day should come in which I could bear a hand in avenging her wrongs and retrieving her fortunes—the only feelings, I may say without hesitation, to which I was true all my lifetime, and which will remain unchanged to my dying day. Faithful to the habits contracted in southern climates, I rose desperately early and worked in the cold, giving to my writing all the time I could spare from my teaching business in the day and from my social duties in the evening.

The main duty after dark was a call on my Lady Patronesses, and especially on Mrs. Rufus Kingsley, who took me in hand as an instructress, and carefully revised and corrected every line I submitted to her severe censorship. I was with her *in prima sera*, and if I was still in time when I took leave of her, I gave the rest of the evening to Casa Percy.

A strange and wonderful character was that of Mrs. Rufus Kingsley, and the study of it was probably

to me the most interesting pursuit of the many that engaged us in our daily intercourse. On a slight acquaintance with her, people described her as a "grand lady," not exactly proud or disdainful, but "distant;" not uncivil or repellent, but overbearing and exacting, and only bestowing her good-will where she found unlimited submissiveness and deference. With me she was, though at first somewhat stiff and austere, always gentle and affectionate, and her voice, when she spoke to me, had often a soft maternal tone, almost more tender than when she addressed her own sons. People sneered at us, calling me "Mrs. Kingsley's Italian pet," and wondered what she could find in me that was worth all the time she devoted to me, all the interest she took in my advancement. And, to tell the truth, I was myself not a little surprised at all that kindness, and often lost myself in vain surmises and silly conjectures to assign to it what in my own country would have been thought the natural and obvious motive. I was as yet scarcely beginning to understand something of the character of American women, and my southern temperament and Italian education had conspired to instil into my mind the most absurd, ungenerous notions about women in general. From the days of Ariosto to those of Casti

and Pananti, we have had in Italy, if not the most immoral, at least the most indecent interpreters of the mysteries of the female heart; and their vile theories about the inevitable consequences of too close a proximity between “fire and straw” scarcely admitted a possibility of an intimate and yet blameless intercourse between the two sexes. I had not yet learnt to set a proper value on the sterling qualities of the women of northern, and especially of Anglo-Saxon blood; of their high sense of honour, their disciplined temperament, the easy control they were taught to exercise over their feelings. And I made no allowance for that eager and almost morbid activity, that fussy and fidgety instinct, which, when not sufficiently engrossed with the cares of their nursery or of their husband’s household, impels them to look anywhere for some object for their overflowing sympathies, and for the proper employment of their superfluous energies.

Mrs. Rufus Kingsley was staying with her sons at a boarding-house, that Paradise of many American women, married or single, which exempts them from the burden of domestic duties. Amusements in Cambridge, or even in Boston, were few and not to her taste. Her sons were out at their classes morning and

evening. Her mind was of too expansive a nature for prolonged solitary study, and the winter evenings were distressingly long. Her intellect wanted communion, contact, interchange of thought, transfusion of ideas, whatever could establish influence over a kindred mind. She had, maybe, conceived some favourable opinion of my natural abilities. She fancied she had found a soil amenable to her culture and likely to repay her husbandry. She hoped and wished to educate me, to cast me in her own mould, to train me after her own fashion. She was a clever woman, she had read much and lost nothing of what she had read ; she could talk wisely or wildly on most subjects, on some with all the eloquence of an enthusiast ; she had deep convictions, she seldom expected dissent from her views, and was little disposed to brook contradiction.

She was deeply and sincerely religious, not irrational or uncharitable in her piety, for she prided herself on her liberality and even impartiality in controversy ; but there was something intensely aggressive, if not bigoted, in her spirit, which left her little inclination to give quarter to a vanquished adversary. She was what might be called a black Protestant. Her hatred of the Papacy went further than I could have expected of any man or woman not an Italian. And as she saw

that I chimed in with her invectives against the Pope and his priests, she took it for granted that I had abjured Catholicism, and asked me whether I was a Unitarian or an Anglican, or "American Protestant Episcopalian," the latter being, as she informed me, the denomination to which she herself belonged.

"Neither," I answered.

"But you are not a Catholic?" she asked.

"I was born and brought up a Catholic, and have never seen reason to go over to another sect. But I confess I am a very bad Papist, an implacable enemy of the Pope King."

"But have you no religious belief?" she insisted.

I looked into her face somewhat surprised and answered with some deliberation: "That depends on what you mean by belief. I can only truly believe what I understand. I believe in daylight when I see it, and I believe that the sun will rise to-morrow morning, not from any certain knowledge but from inference drawn from the fact that it has risen invariably for several thousand years. And I believe I must die because none of the millions of human beings who have lived before me escaped death. Anything that exceeds my comprehension I can only profess to believe."

She looked perplexed. "Am I to understand that in your opinion there is no God and no future life ?" she inquired with a long face.

"My dear lady," I replied, "these are subjects which it is dangerous to examine in one's own private conscience, let alone to discuss them with others. You ask me what religious denomination I belong to. I can only answer that I am of a Church with only one member—myself. There are important points about natural religion which I must settle in my own mind before I can proceed to challenge the titles which this or that confession or persuasion can put forth for my preference. To begin with, you may ask, 'Am I a Deist?' My answer is, 'Yes, if to be one I need only declare that if there were no God it would be expedient to make one.' Again you ask: 'Do I believe in a future life?' My answer is, 'Yes, if you accept as *belief* my *wish* and *hope* that the wrongs of this world may be redressed in another.'"

She looked at me in silent amazement, and I went on: "What do I know? Here I am shut in in a dark chamber, lost in an ocean of doubt. I find myself in a world of matter of which I can neither assert nor deny the immensity or the eternity. The infinite crushes my finite faculties. Is the universe a body, and is there a

soul to it? Is God this *Anima Mundi*? There are forces and laws which we can neither resist nor control, and these may well be in the hands of a spirit powerful enough to have created, powerful enough to annihilate both matter and space and time. *Cælo tonante credidimus Jovem.* All that is above me I am willing to acknowledge as God. But what do I know about his person? What do I know about a spirit? If there is a God it is a *Deus Ignotus*. All rests on a mere hypothesis, on nothing that can be established by reason as incontrovertible fact."

"Just so," she broke in, "hence the necessity for a revelation."

"Allow me," I said, "I have already expressed my conviction that if there were no God it might be advisable to make one. Unfortunately the thing has been done and overdone, time out of mind, again and again. Man has created a god—many gods—all in his own image. There may have been something god-like in the Jehovah of the Jews or the Jupiter of the Greeks. But these gods have served their time. They no longer answer as prototypes of the Man-God of our age."

"What about Christ?" she asked very solemnly.

"Christ was no God; but only God's messenger,"

I answered hastily, then added, apologetically: "At least, such is the opinion of the Channings, the Nortons, the Wares, and a thousand divines in this country whose titles to intellectual culture and blameless life you would be the first to acknowledge. Unitarianism was the doctrine held by at least one half of the Church from the fourth to the seventh century, and in no part of the world had it cast deeper roots than in my own country. Nowhere did it revive (as Socinianism) with greater spontaneousness than in Italy, when, at the dawn of the Lutheran Reformation, religious thought was put to the test of free inquiry all over Europe. The bent of an educated Italian's mind is towards Positivism. If he *must* have a creed, he will choose the one that calls for the least abnegation of reason."

"It is sheer spiritual pride that blinds you," she said with evident concern. "The beginning of wisdom is the fear of the Lord."

"Wherefore should I fear the Lord?" I retorted. "I am a Christian. I believe in God's messenger. And I believe in Manes, Confucius and Mahomet; and I believe in Homer, Dante, and Shakespeare, in all of whom I recognise God's messengers. Understand, that I give God the benefit of the doubt. And I ask myself, if God exists, on what terms rests man's re-

sponsibility to Him ? If God exists, He must be an all-powerful, all-prescient Being ; and man can only be what God has made and makes him. We are the creatures of circumstance and can only act according to our lights. When will the Churches ever settle the questions of predestination and free will ? If there is a God in the world there must be as much of Him in us as is good for us. We have a reason and a conscience; instinct would be a sufficiently safe guidance for us, were it not for the evil that encompasses us all round about. And what is evil ? Who is the author of evil ? Is not God the Creator of all that is ? The only religious scheme in which my mind might possibly find rest, would be a kind of modern civilised Manicheism. The Manicheans believed in two Gods ; two co-eternal antagonistic principles of good and evil. The one was light and spirit, the other darkness and matter. Whatever is matter in us, our bodies, our baser propensities, innate or hereditary, enslave us to the evil power ; but against it we have our reason and conscience, our God. That God, indeed, is not omnipotent. The power of the two principles is nearly balanced. Between them there is endless strife with a gradual but infinitely remote chance of the ultimate victory of light over darkness. In this warfare

between good and evil we are all militant ; all of us according as the spirit prevails in us against the flesh, or the flesh against the spirit. We can and ought to fight for God against the devil. Our life is but a battle and a march ; every step should be on the path of intellectual and moral progress. But we can only do it according to the forces that God, *i.e.* nature and circumstance, bestowed upon us. Some have been extraordinarily gifted in that respect, and we look upon them as supernatural beings, and these are the God's messengers, the messiahs, prophets, poets and legislators. Some of them are our guides by reason of their intellectual faculties ; some on account of their moral qualities. In most of them both gifts are admirably blended, in none more so than in Christ. *Non surrexit Major.* But perhaps the fulness of the times is not yet. What man shall put limits to the powers of man's mind ? And wherever the development of man's mind manifests itself—there we must recognise God's revelation. For the present I am content to be a Christian."

" You believe in Christ ; but, I suppose, not in His miracles ? "

" My dear Mrs. Kingsley," I said with genuine warmth, " what greater miracle should I want than

the Sermon on the Mount—the only moral poem in which no critic has yet found a blemish?"

This quieted her for a time; she looked bewildered, at a loss what to make of me. But she often returned to the charge; she wished me to consult some of her favourite divines. She was evidently bent on winning me over to her Protestant-Episcopal Church, and insisted that my reliance on reason and conscience was a delusion and a snare.

"Our mind," said she, "can find no rest except in submission to Church authority."

"Papal authority, in that case," I cried out. "You will end by turning Papist."

Many a word spoken in jest, turned out grim earnest. The day came when Mrs. Rufus Kingsley, the black Protestant, went over to Rome. And I must tell how it happened, now, lest I should find no opportunity at the proper time.

Three years later, when I had for some time lost sight of her, she wrote me an affectionate letter to inform me that she was about to contract a second marriage with a Mr. Paul, a wealthy Quaker in Philadelphia. Her union with this new husband only lasted a twelvemonth, and she again wrote that to get over her bereavement she was going to Europe, where she

intended to give most of her time to Italy and Rome. I answered wishing her a pleasant voyage, and added, still jestingly, "I see what it is; you did not succeed in converting me, and you are now going to try your powers of persuasion upon the Pope. But take care that the old man do not convert you instead."

I heard nothing more about her for twenty-two years. But in 1863, when I went to America at the time of the great Civil War, I chanced to go through Cincinnati, the place my friend had described as the home of her first wedded life. There, I was told, she resided now as Mrs. Paul. She was a Roman Catholic, and so zealous a convert, that she had with her second husband's fortune founded and endowed as many as eight nunneries of Ursuline, Salesian, and other orders, within or without the city, and her life was spent in the management and superintendence of them all.

I was not quite surprised, but somewhat curious to learn by what phases her mind had passed before she was brought to seek in such an office a scope for the employment of her undeniable energies. I went to one of the convents in which she had reserved some apartments for her own home, but I was told she was engaged and could not be disturbed at that

early hour, (it was two o'clock, p.m.) I sent up my card, and left word that I would call three hours later. I did so, and the answer then was that Mrs. Paul positively "refused to see me." I was leaving the door thunderstruck by that snubbing message, when I was met by a middle-aged gentleman in whom I recognised young Rufus Kingsley, my friend's eldest son, now a successful barrister, who was on his way to pay his daily visit to his mother.

I told him what treatment I had just had to submit to, and he shook his head and said : "You must not mind my poor mother. The rascally priests have turned her head. I have heard her speak of you as one of the reprobates of the Turin Chamber who voted for Cavour's Bill proclaiming Rome capital of Italy. '*Vous avez mangé du Pape,*' she says, and she would not be sorry to see you dying of indigestion. You must forgive her ; she is quite crazy on such subjects."

Ten years later, 1873, I happened to be in Rome on the arrival of a large band of American pilgrims, on their visit to Pope Pius IX. The leader of the procession was no other than the same Mrs. Paul ; and she was the one whose privilege it was to lay a hatful of Peter's pence at the feet of the captive

pontiff, and to receive from him such blessings as raised her almost to the rank of a second Matilda of Tuscany.

I have dwelt on these particulars because they show the tendency of my singular friend's mind; a mind apt to take the most exaggerated views on one side, and by a sudden revulsion to run into the maddest extremes on the opposite. But it was not merely on religious topics that I differed with her at the time of our earliest acquaintance in Cambridge. She could talk by the hour sensibly and pleasantly enough on a variety of matters; but she was passionate and almost violent in argument, and when hard-pushed by inexorable logic, she would, woman-like, fly off at a tangent, shifting her ground and taking up new positions with a waywardness, and yet an obstinacy, which had power to wear out such adversaries as she was unable to overcome. Even on mere rhetorical and philological subjects, where I was willing to bow to her with the deference of a pupil to his mistress, we had often battles royal on points in which, starting as we did from different principles, we must of course come to conflicting conclusions. To me at that crisis her assistance was most valuable; for she looked over my lectures, and made me read them out to her,

giving me many a useful hint, both about style and elocution, which would greatly have availed me, had it been as easy for me to follow her advice as for her to tender it. I have already said that I had never opened a grammar; and she allowed that a language like the English is best learnt and written by use. Grammar, however, is as indispensable for a writer as drawing for an artist; and we must master it, no matter whether by precept or practice; there were a thousand pitfalls and snares about some parts of speech, and especially about the prepositions *in* and *on*, *at* and *to*, *by* and *with*, etc., into which, without her warning, I was unconsciously falling; and I could never be sufficiently thankful for the strict, severe, minute censorship which pointed them out. But I aspired to something more than mere correctness. I wished my English to be as much as possible like that of the authors I most admired, Bulwer, Disraeli, Carlyle, Washington Irving, and the like. And there we fell off, because "for her own part," she said, "she cared very little about the beautiful in language," and she deemed it premature, if not presumptuous, in a mere beginner to attempt it. She laughed at my notions that language should be musical. She had never heard that there could be

rhythm for prose as there was metre for verse, that an orator's speech in ancient Athens was a kind of *recitativo*, relying for effect on the accompaniment of musical instruments; that some of Cicero's sentences, like the famous one: “Pātrīs dīctūm sāpiēns tēmēritās filīi cōmprōbāvīt,” were received by the Roman Senate with a thunder of applause, solely for the impression that the exquisite harmony arising from the arrangement of the long and short syllables in those few words made on their well-trained ears.

All these, she contended, were my Italian fancies. They were the result of that corrupt taste which had degraded the drama into an opera. “The English,” she said, “are a nation of men, language is for them merely the garb of thought. Like their personal attire it can never be too plain and neat. They leave flounces and furbelows to their women, and even these depend for such trumperies on the inventiveness of Frenchman-milliners.”

“ You are my mistress, dear lady,” I answered, “ and I hope you will find me a submissive pupil. No doubt language is but the garment of thought, but should not the clothes fit and suit the body? Should not language rise and sink with the loftiness and lowness of the theme? Surely the little I am as yet

able to read of Shakespeare gives me a different idea of the English views on such matters. Is the grave-digger's language at Ophelia's grave the same as Hamlet's in his withering address to his mother before the portraits of her two husbands? And is there not, in English as well as in all languages, such a thing as style?"

"There is, of course, poetry as well as prose," she answered. "But poetical prose is to me as detestable as prosaic poetry."

And with this, which seemed to her the clenching argument, she closed the discussion, and taking up my manuscript, which I laid before her on the table, she said: "This is your introduction, let us see." And putting up her glasses, without which she could not read, she read out the first sentence:

"Down in a southern clime, amid the silent waves of a tideless sea, there lies a weary land whose life is only in the Past and the Future."

Here she stopped short and removed her glasses.

"Down," she said. "Why *down*? What is the use of that *down*? What do you mean by it?"

"It is merely a geographical designation," I explained. "We talk of high latitudes at the Pole, we must be going *down* as we near the Line."

"Nonsense," she replied, "it is an idle word. Have you not said, *In a southern clime?* I do not see indeed why you should not have used the word *climate*, which belongs to prose. Neither can I understand why Italy should be described as a *southern land*, considering that Rome or Naples must be in about the same parallel as New York. But let that pass, only down with that *down*. Apart from all inaccuracy or finicalness of expression I hate redundancy. Your *down* is an expletive—away with it!"

"Away with it by all means," I assented, "only what can we put in its place? Shall we say, *Far in a southern —?*"

"*Far! far!*" she ejaculated; "in an age whose mission is to annihilate distance! When we expect from month to month the steamer which will take us across to Europe as we are now ferried over to South Boston! Italy far from us? I think no more of a voyage to it than of a journey to Cincinnati. It is all plain sailing and no jolting."

I shook my head.

"You are quite right, I dare say; but I don't see how I can mend it."

"Mend it by letting it alone," she said, with a slight sneer. "Just scratch out the *Down*. Begin,

In a southern clime—or, better still, *climate*. It will sound more simple and natural; more sober, decent, and respectable."

"Pardon me, it will not sound at all. There I must beg leave to differ from you. Do you not see, as you read the whole sentence, that there is a certain wave of sadness suited to the subject, and pervading it throughout its four members, with a fair proportion and mutual correspondence between them? Lop off one syllable of the first member, and there is an end to all the harmony of the period."

"Fiddlesticks!" broke out the lady. "Excuse me; but you are provoking. Why do you not write verses, since you count the syllables, and lay them in as a mosaic-worker in Rome would stick the little pieces of glass destined to make a picture?"

"Pardon me," I insisted, "I neither count nor arrange the syllables. The harmony is in the thought. Language is not its dress, as you said; it is its flesh and blood. Thought must come forth soul and body from the brain that conceives it; it only lives through the words. Hence is translation so difficult; for there can be only one genuine expression to every thought. Any reproduction of it can only at the best be approximative. The ear is my guide."

"Am I to understand that you think in English?"

"Ay! and dream in English."

"You are an improvvisatore. Thought and words spring up in your brain, all full-grown and armed, like Minerva from the head of Jupiter."

"Quite the contrary," I said; "thought teems and labours in my brain till it finds an utterance. It comes out incarnate with the words; but it is in most cases little more than a mere embryo, and it has to be licked into shape like a bear's cub, till the ear is satisfied with it."

"And, after all, it is not English," she said.

"How so?" I asked. "Is it ungrammatical?"

"It is un-English. It is what would never come into an Englishman's mind to write."

Here I was dead beaten — silenced, though convinced against my will.

"I must see how I can manage to alter that first sentence. Please pass your pencil across it for a mark. After all, I hope my audience will be well aware that I am not an Englishman. Something odd and outlandish they must be prepared to put up with."

She opened her eyes wide and was silent for half a minute. Then she said :

"Not if you will be guided. But let us proceed."

Thus the reading went on; the lady striking off many a palpable blunder without hesitation, and with my full and immediate consent; now and then carping at something that struck her as a foreign idiom, but to which she seemed to me unable to raise a rational objection. In the latter case, the obnoxious phrase received the pencil-mark which referred it to my ultimate calm and deliberate revision and judgment.

Seeing me rather less docile than she expected, she hurried on as she turned over page after page, limiting herself to fewer remarks, not quite offended or displeased, to all appearance, but evidently less anxious to volunteer her criticism where its correctness might chance to be disputed.

At the end, however, she again entered her protest. The lecture ran through the various periods of Italian history, showing how that country, having at last reached the lowest depths of degradation, evinced now some symptoms of its aspiration to a new existence, and it concluded with the following simile:

"The phoenix has been consumed upon her funeral-pyre — her last breath has vanished in the air with the smoke of her ashes; but the dawn breaks, the first rays of the sun are falling upon the desolate

hearth ; the ashes begin to heave, and from their bosom the new bird springs forth with luxuriant plumage, displaying her bold flight, with her eyes fixed on that sun from which she derived her origin."

Mrs. Kingsley had hardly patience to read it through.

"Surely," she cried out, "you will strike off this? It would spoil the whole lecture. It is hackneyed; mere balderdash — wordy, bombastic. It has no meaning; it answers no purpose."

"A pencil-mark, please," was all I answered, and rolling up my manuscript, I put it in my pocket.

The day of trial came at the end of that week.

CHAPTER X.

SPRING TIDES.

A day of battle—A large and select audience—Social classes in America—American polish—Two sisters—A contrast—A love romance—Happy life and tragic death—American lecturing—Ralph Waldo Emerson—The great trial—Misgivings—Success—The world of letters—Prescott—Ticknor—Samuel Howe.

THE Saturday ending the first week in January, 1838, was—shall we say the *happiest* day of my life? That adjective is used in what grammarians call the “Relative Superlative” form, and in itself it may not in reality amount to the value of the plain positive. If I, for instance, close my door against the world, and shaving before the glass declare that “I am the *handsomest* man in my dressing-room,” I do not thereby by any means assert that I am at all *handsome*. And, in the same manner, though a minister at a Guildhall banquet, a bridegroom at a wedding-breakfast, or an elector at

the hustings, may use and abuse that unfortunate phrase, we must not take it for granted that the orator who proclaims any particular day to be his *happiest*, is for all that truly and thoroughly happy, the case being that he may not unfrequently have the best reasons to feel positively miserable.

For my own part, all I can say of that Saturday is that it was certainly a day of triumph, though it is right to premise that it began in trepidation and misgiving.

My lectures had to be delivered in the morning; for it was understood that many conspicuous persons from Boston and its environs would honour me with their presence, and these would have found it a great hardship to drive out in the dark through the snow and ice of a winter evening; to say nothing of any engagements they might have before or after their late dinners, with which they would not easily have suffered any such entertainment as Cambridge had to offer, to clash. The hour appointed for my introduction was therefore eleven o'clock in the forenoon, and by that time the number of sledges that came up from the Yankee Athens to its academical suburb, and the crowd that gathered within the walls of the Town Hall were truly alarming.

The report that the editors of the *North American*

Review had thought well enough of that first essay of mine on "Maria Louisa, Duchess of Parma," to make room for it in the pages of their journal, had removed the bushel under which the light of my farthing candle lay hid. My name had been mentioned here and there, and a good-natured feeling had sprung up in many kind hearts that, if there were anything in me worth encouraging, encouragement should certainly not be withheld from me

Among the earliest arrivals were Governor Everett and his two daughters, with whom I had kept on the best terms, though I had not often seen them; close to them came Mr. Ticknor, Mr. Prescott, Mr. Sprague, and other literary men of distinction to whom I had been introduced at the Boston Athenæum; our bond of union being the study of European, especially of Italian and Spanish literature. Several of these were now, with Felton and Longfellow, Bowen and Lovering, and other luminaries of the Professors' staff of Harvard University, clustering together in the rear of the hall, keeping an open way for the ladies who were majestically sailing up to their places in the front seats.

Foremost among these were some of the pupils I had lately been attending in Boston, Miss Minot, Miss

Lawrence, three Miss Elliots, Mrs. Page, Mrs. Chase, and, dearest of all, two Miss Appletons, with whom I was on more friendly terms than would have been allowed to a mere teacher.

All these ladies, married or single, belonged to that class of free and enlightened American citizens who looked upon themselves as the aristocracy of the republic. They lived in fine large mansions, clustering together round the Boston common, in Spruce and Chestnut, or Summer and Winter Streets, and drove out in superb equipages, though they had not gone so far yet as to display their armorial bearings on their panels, or gold and silver lace in the hats and coats of their coachmen's and footmen's liveries. The slave-holders of the South, and especially those who belonged to the F.F. or "First Families" of Virginia, and owned the plantations where their forefathers, the cavaliers of Charles I., had settled, laughed to scorn the pretensions of these New Englanders, the "low-born descendants of the canting Roundheads; the mere parsons, pedlars and clodhoppers, who had landed as fugitives from the ranks of Cromwell's disbanded partisans." But in Boston the few surviving houses who could trace their lineage to the "Pilgrim Fathers" were still looked up to with respect, and these, as

well as those which had become connected with them by marriage, if their wealth enabled them to keep up a style corresponding to their rank, constituted *la crème de la crème* of a highly polished and somewhat exclusive social circle. Both its members, and those who strove to be received within its pale, had probably made their fortune by trade; but a line of demarkation was drawn between those actually engaged in, and those retired from business; though the wise ones among the latter took good care that their money should abide in those lucrative concerns from which they had formally withdrawn their names. It was a society organised somewhat after the fashion of the old Florentine and Genoese patriciate; among which the maxim was that "commerce soils no man's hands," and that "no honest work can taint good blood."

But whatever title birth or wealth might give to admission within this charmed circle, certain it is that education was the best passport to it. You found in this class scarcely any individual entirely destitute of some degree of polish. Most men, especially those of the rising generation, had gone through college. Many of them had been in Europe, and had made the best of their sojourn there. Their houses were hospitably open to foreign, especially to English

visitors, and the ladies had all the benefit of English, Swiss, and German governesses. It was not in this society that your ear was frequently struck with any Americanism of idiom or accent. It was among these people that I made my very first practice of English, and, although I had all my life to struggle against some peculiarities of English pronunciation, although those who did not at once set me down as a foreigner, often charged me with something like a Scotch or Irish brogue, no one ever detected in me the least shade of a Yankee twang.

There were not many even of the acknowledged leaders of that set who had not taken every opportunity to show me favour; but nowhere did I meet with a kinder or more cordial reception than at the Appletons', where my best friends were the two young ladies of the house, Mary and Fanny, two sisters whose qualities of mind and heart were as universally admitted as those personal attractions by which they had borne the palm as the belles of a London and a Paris season, their charm lying not only in the exquisite loveliness of each of them, but also in the contrast arising from the apparent likeness and yet real difference and contrast in their style of beauty.

They were both tall and slender, but Fanny, the

younger, exceeded by nearly an inch the height of her sister, and seemed therefore somewhat too slim to match the perfect symmetry and elegance of her sister's figure. Both had that clear and lustrous, though somewhat wan complexion which gives the beauty of so many of their countrywomen a weakly and evanescent appearance ; but while Fanny's whiteness was more dazzlingly marble-like, it had less—it had none—of that faint pink hue which not unfrequently overspread and lighted up the elder's face. The features were regular in both of them ; but in Mary a very slightly and very gracefully turned-up nose, and a habitual curl of the upper lip gave the countenance an archness and sprightliness of expression which was totally wanting in the statuesque lineaments of the other girl.

To these outward marks, as might be expected, corresponded the disposition of the sisters' minds. Mary had the liveliness and buoyancy, the joyousness of a happy temperament ; Fanny had the sweetness and pensiveness of a settled melancholy. In the elder it was wit and sense, in the younger deep sensitiveness that prevailed. The one seemed destined to go through life singing and dancing ; the other appeared to be haunted by the foreboding of the early and cruel death which, as it turned out, was in store for

her, and had an air of serene and tranquil resignation to whatever the will of Heaven might bring.

With respect to these fair maidens a romance had at the time been got up by current rumour in the connection with the poet Longfellow. The poet, we are told, met the Appletons on the Rhine in the depth of the agony into which he had been thrown by the sudden death of his young and lovely wife; when "the bough had broken under the burden of the unripe fruit." When he was able to look up from the "blindness of his anguish," the sympathy of these friends, and especially of the two young ladies, was balm to his wound, and he clung to it with the instinct of a vine twining its tendrils round the tree that gives it support. That he should mistake their pity for a tenderer feeling, and that gratitude on his part should ripen into a warmer passion, was only too natural. He was with them a whole summer in South Germany and Switzerland, and the impression of all the Yankee tourists they fell in with throughout their journeying was that the young widower, with his ardent poetic temperament, had been smitten with both the sisters, the doubt only being which of them would ultimately be the lady of his choice. Both the poet and the Appletons were now back in

New England, and the report was that before they parted at Interlaken, the poet had told his tale; that he had asked Fanny Appleton to fill up the void left in his heart by his departed wife, and had suffered a repulse—a harder blow for him to bear than if one death itself had inflicted.

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My acquaintance with the Miss Appletons did not go much beyond the period of my stay in the country. The elder was soon afterwards married in England to the son of Sir James Mackintosh, the historian. I called upon her one morning, early in May, 1840, at her temporary residence in one of the cottages in St. Katharine's, Regent's Park. On leaving her, after a short visit, I saw, half-hidden in the foliage of the tiny garden, her sister Fanny, in her fresh morning attire, the very ideal of the “*creatura bella bianco-vestita*” of the Italian bard; a lovely vision quite in keeping with the pure but subdued light of the English spring that encompassed her. She emerged from the bower with her outstretched hand, and greeted me with her wonted cordiality; informing me that she would be off to America on the morrow with her brother, as Mrs. Mackintosh would soon leave for her husband's country seat, I forgot in what county.

This is the last I saw of them; but I learnt in after years that the suit of Longfellow for the hand of the lovely Fanny, now the only Miss Appleton, had been renewed, and that as the publication of the "Voices of the Night," and, what is more, of "Hyperion"—a romance in which was told all the story of their meeting on the Rhine and of their parting at Interlaken—had raised the poet's fame to the highest pitch both in New and in Old England, the heart of the "lady passing fair" had relented, and her admirer's constancy had received its reward. Thus did Fanny Appleton become a wife and a happy mother of children. But the last we heard of her is that, after not very many years of wedded bliss, her summer dress, by one of those cruel accidents with which muslin and crinoline have made us only too familiar, caught fire, and she perished in the flames, in sight of all she loved, and who vainly hastened to her rescue.

The sweet and sad remembrance of those two charming sisters has, however, too long caused me to wander from my subject. I must now go back to my introductory lecture, where, as I stated, the Miss Appletons, as well as Longfellow, honoured me with their presence, but were too far asunder, or perhaps

too well aware of the idle gossip freely circulating about their transatlantic adventures, to do more than exchange a slight and distant nod of recognition.

Now for the lecture.

The hall was quite full by the time I entered and took my seat waiting for the stroke of the appointed hour. The lectures were altogether a private undertaking. I found myself alone facing my audience. No platform had been raised, there was no committee of management at my back, no chairman to introduce me; there I sat, unfriended, behind a large table, on the crimson cloth of which was a sparkling tumbler of cold water, and near it my gloves, my white handkerchief, and my tidily-folded manuscript.

Such little nerve as had borne me up on my first trial when my benevolent Henry Ware sat by my side, seemed all at once and utterly to forsake me, when it was most sorely needed. For I knew now something more of the task I had in hand. I was more eager for success, and less easy about the consequences of a failure. I had by this time attended many lectures, and understood only too well on what gifts the most popular orators relied for ascendancy over their audience. I knew of what account personal appearance, voice, manner, above all things self-

confidence and presumption, were in a lecturer, and felt myself miserably deficient in all of them. I had but lately attended one of Ralph Waldo Emerson's addresses, and could still recall the spell which his grave and noble countenance, the deep tone of his voice and the solemnity of his whole demeanour cast on a vast assemblage. There was something magic in the arching of his brow, the turning up of the white of his eyes, the catching of his breath, the long, almost painful pause by which he kept his audience in suspense, preparing them for some concise sentence, some happy word into which he seemed to have condensed all his wisdom, a sentence or a word which, when so delivered, struck us as the revelation of some great, new, abstruse and recondite truth, but which, nevertheless, if seen in type in some pamphlet or journal, might probably have been passed over as a commonplace and obvious truism.

I have not yet forgotten one flagrant instance of the glamour that this wondrous mannerism of the great philosopher had on all who heard him. He was labouring to vindicate the independence of individual judgment, inveighing against the pedantry that would base its arguments on a reference to *ipse dixit* authority, and crush a sovereign mind under the

weight of sophisms available at the utmost to overawe some puny and feeble intellect ; when, suddenly raising his voice, he cried out : "They bid me *jurare in verba magistri !* They hamper me ! They fetter me !" And after half a minute's interval, during which he held up his hand, as if at a loss for a proper expression—for the words which were however staring at him from the page out of which he was reading—he gave a great thump on the table, and thundered forth :

"They pin me down !"

The emphasis and vehemence with which he uttered those four monosyllables sent a thrill throughout our nerves. He made us feel as if all of us, and he with us, were undergoing the torture of the poor insect caught in the toils of the entomologist, and impaled for the furtherance of scientific interests. That pin ran through our very vitals.

It was an apt illustration of his conceit, no doubt ; and it conveyed to our minds in a forcible manner what might otherwise have failed to strike us as anything transcendently sublime ; and that effect it most assuredly had, for as we went out those words "They pin me down !" were repeated on every side ; a satisfactory evidence, as I felt, of the impression they had

made ; and an irrefragable proof, if any were needed, that what is called oratory is mere art ; and like that of the stage-actor, it depends for effect on the living presence of the artist, and leaves nothing after his death but a vague fame of his wondrous performance.

To this art, to its clever tricks and dodges, to its endless devices and resources, I felt that I was and must ever remain a perfect stranger. I was morbidly alive to the disadvantages of an unprepossessing appearance, of a foreign accent, of an imperfect command over my *h's*; I even mistrusted the expediency and opportunity of my subject; for it was after all a remote and extraneous topic that I had undertaken to bring before my hearers; something of which many of them had never heard before, of which they never need hear afterwards; in no way connected with the pursuits or interests of their every-day life. What was Italy to them, or they to Italy ? How could I hope to awaken their sympathies, or bring them to share my enthusiasm ? On what degree of their knowledge could I reckon ? How rudimentary should I make my instruction in the hope of being understood ? And, on the other hand, how could I be plain and intelligible without running the risk of being tedious ? It was long before I

learnt that, “be the knowledge of your readers or hearers whatever it may, you should ever address them as if you thought they had never heard one syllable of the matter about which you wish to entertain them.” And this was John Thaddeus Delane’s advice to the writers of his leading articles.

No one can imagine with what tumultuous rapidity these discomfiting thoughts assailed and ran riot in my mind ; and with what dismal misgivings they filled me. I have seen in later years an Italian Prime Minister carried away from his seat in the Deputies’ Chamber in a fainting fit, which was his usual contrivance when he wished to escape from far less trying difficulties than those my imagination at this moment conjured up before me. Every line in my lecture on the morning of which I had in the heat of composition applauded myself, seemed now to rise in judgment against me. My very anxiety about the welfare of Italy, my genuine sorrow for her long calamities, my worship of the memory of her great departed, my ardent love of all she can boast most beautiful in nature and art—all the best feelings which had suggested my theme; from which I had drawn inspiration ; and to which I had given full scope—however pure and holy they might be so long as they lay hid in the depths of

my heart—were only too likely to be out of place here, where their utterance ran the risk of being sneered at as clap-trap; or as they called it there, "buncomb"—the lowest style of eloquence resorted to by stump-orators at their wits' ends;—the kind of oratory my mentor, Mrs. Kingsley, had stigmatised as "balderdash."

Mrs. Rufus Kingsley! I caught occasional glimpses of her white silk bonnet as she sat in the third or fourth row, behind the *élite* of the Boston ladies to whom precedence had courteously been allowed by their Cambridge friends. There she sat, demure yet benignant, looking at me with a grave, thoughtful expression, intended, as I felt, to sum up all the useful hints I had received from her as I went to consult her evening after evening.

I looked at her and thought, what if Mrs. Kingsley had been right after all? What if a lecture should be prose and nothing but prose, and if a flowery language, a poetical phraseology were inopportune in it, and unbecoming? What if the *down* at the beginning of my opening sentence, that *down* about which I had battled so stoutly and stubbornly, as it was most undoubtedly an idle word, a mere expletive, should have been expunged as she so earnestly re-

commended? What if that long rigmarole about the phoenix rising from its ashes at the end of the lecture had been really worn threadbare as the lady contended, and the advice that it should be struck off was as sensible as it was well meant? Was it too late to hear reason? Should I not heed Mrs. Kingsley's pencil marks as I read, and repair the fatal consequences of my blundering obstinacy from line to line? No! It was not to be thought of; good or bad, my style must be my own. As I had made my bed I must lie on it. And as I came to this conclusion my courage and resolution revived. It has always been so with me; and I suppose the same must be the case with many other men who would not be as ready as I am to avow it. All the worst terrors of the battle are in the anticipation of it. They are soon forgotten in the thick of the action. The ghosts which haunt Richard in his tent in the dark, vanish in the open air with the first streak of daylight, and the first note of the *reveille*. He awakes and goes forth, and

“A thousand hearts are great within his bosom.”

As the clock struck eleven I rose, and before the buzz of conversation had wholly subsided, I read out with a clear though still somewhat faltering voice:

"Down in a southern clime——"

And forthwith there was a dead silence, and, as the saying is, "you could have heard a pin drop."

Whereupon I raised my eyes and scanned the array of faces before me, and almost hated them for having made me afraid of them. And it was almost in a tone of defiance that I began again with greater energy :

"Down in a southern clime, amidst the silent waves of a silent sea," with all that followed to the end of the period. That was half the battle, and I went on without hesitation or interruption; the mastery I had regained over my nerves enabling me not only to proceed from beginning to end with modest composure, but also to throw some emphasis on those passages on which I chiefly relied for effect, and which were meant as an appeal to my hearers' best feelings.

And I had my reward in that subdued involuntary murmur by which an audience betrays a genuine sensation; a reward far more flattering to an orator than any burst of applause which may follow on his last words; for mere noise may be as much the expression of the pleasure the audience has derived from his speech, as of the relief they feel that the speech is over,

But a still more satisfactory proof that my audience were neither displeased with the lecture, nor ill-disposed towards the lecturer, might be seen in the apparent reluctance they evinced to go asunder and leave the hall. The gentlemen stood up with their great-coats on and their hats in their hands, as if loath to face the cold outside air.

There was a babel of voices from which only what could tickle my ears most agreeably reached me. The ladies put on their most radiant smiles as they crowded round the table with their gushing "Thank you! Oh, thank you very much!" The Boston ladies were nearest; foremost came up the Miss Appletons, who allowed the flow of congratulations to abate a little before they could be heard amidst so many voices.

"We have no words to thank you enough," began Mary, the elder sister: "and I cannot tell you how grieved we are that it will be impossible for us to attend the whole course—at least regularly, though we will try to come down now and then; unless—we could induce you to put the lectures off to milder weather—"

"Or unless we could have them in Boston," broke in the younger sister. "Do you think you could repeat the course in town? There is little doubt a

class could be got up for you there. How many would you think sufficient? How many have you here?"

"That I cannot tell you as yet," I answered.

"But that I can answer," said Mrs. Percy, stepping in between us. "Here is the list. There were only twenty names when we came in, and see how rapidly it has been filling up. We shall muster fifty at the very least."

"We can warrant as many," said Miss Appleton, "and I am sure mother will be most happy to put her drawing-room at your service for any day and hour you may appoint, and for as long as you want it."

"Let us hope any lady's drawing-room may be too small for the purpose, Miss Appleton," suggested a gentleman with a polite bow to the young lady, who turned, and seeing the gentleman was a stranger to me, went through the form of introduction: "Mr. Mariotti—Dr. Howe."

Dr. Howe was a slender-built man, somewhat above the middle height, with a deep projecting forehead and well-chiselled features; but with a somewhat overworked and careworn air about him. Though hitherto personally unknown to me, he was already renowned in both hemispheres for the zeal

and intelligence with which he directed the Boston Asylum for the Blind, Deaf, and Dumb; an establishment altogether of his own creation, to which he had devoted his whole life, equally well deserving of the cause of humanity and of the interests of science.

"If Mr. Mariotti wants a hall for a Boston audience," he spoke, when the ceremony of introduction had been gone through, "why should he not avail himself of the lecture-room in our institution? We will manage all that, Miss Appleton, and Mr. Mariotti will be saved all expense and a great deal of trouble."

With this he shook hands with me, and took the two Miss Appletons, one under each arm, offering to see them safe to their sledges.

The company now began to disperse, and it soon became possible for me to leave the hall. Near the door, as I expected, I found my friend, Mrs. Rufus Kingsley, waiting for me as was her wont, who took my arm, claiming me as her cavalier on her way home.

We walked for some time in a dead silence, which, for my part, I was in no hurry to break. It was for her to speak first.

"You have had a great triumph to-day," she said.

"You are out of leading-strings, my big baby, and you can stand and walk alone."

"Quite the contrary," I answered. "I never needed my kind nurse's help more than I do now. My triumph, as you call it, terrifies me. I have before me a far more arduous task than I looked forward to. Only think; twelve lectures to be written in as many weeks!"

"Well, what is that? It is no more than falls to the lot of every country parson willing to do his duty."

"You forget," said I, "that these reverend gentlemen have the Spirit to prompt them, but I—"

"But you have the guidance of your own genius," she interrupted, with a smile very much like a sneer; "and you see how fortunate it was that you trusted it, and it alone."

"Not so, dearest Mrs. Kingsley; success, were it never so flatteringly complete, might make me vain and giddy, but not unjust or ungrateful. I never was more convinced than I now am, that your advice was sound and your judgment correct. Never did I feel more forcibly than I did while I was reading, how wrong-headed and obstinate I had been; but I—'

"But you made a better estimate of your audience's standard of taste than I did ; you gave them what they liked—what they could best appreciate."

"Nay, nay, lady mine ! you must not be unjust to them, however severe you may be with me. It was not want of taste or sense that disposed my audience to treat me with indulgence. They simply made allowance for me—a foreigner. They were amused with what struck them as quaint and outlandish. Had the language been strictly and faultlessly English they could never have accepted it as my writing. They would have cried : 'Non est de saeco tanta farina tuo.' And, to tell you the truth," I continued, "that was the reason that set me so frequently against your advice, even while I recognised its perfect wisdom and kindness. I was anxious that my grammar should be safe ; but no less was I determined that the style—the manner—should be my own."

We had reached her door by this time. She stood on the steps, rather bewildered than convinced, yet, on the whole, not altogether displeased.

"Well ! well ! well !" she exclaimed, after a brief pause, "a wilful man must have his way. After all, it is for you to know what suits you and these

Yankee girls best. And I shall think no worse of a man because he stands up for his independence."

On these terms we parted as good friends as ever. And henceforth, evening after evening, I came to her with my lectures; and was as grateful for the advice I approved and accepted as for that which I approved and—rejected.

The days, weeks, and months following that first Saturday in January, 1838, were as blissful as incessant toil and anxiety could make them. I still went round in my capacity of a private teacher the livelong day; but I rose habitually at four, and had the early morning for my writing; and I gave as much of my evening to society as I could spare from my mentor's censorship of my work as it proceeded from day to day. I had resisted the pressure of those who advised me to move my quarters to Boston. But I had so far consulted my convenience as to give up my turret at Dr. Marx's Young Ladies' Academy, and establish myself in the parlour floor of a decent lodging-house in Cambridge, close to the college buildings, and only a few doors from the Percys and the Kingsleys.

My Boston friends had been as good as their words. They had taken upon themselves the arrangement of all that concerned my lectures. It was settled that

the same lecture which was delivered in Cambridge on the Saturday, should be repeated at Boston on the Monday immediately ensuing; and to that effect a blank week was allowed to intervene between the introduction, and the regular proceeding of the course. In neither place was the audience very numerous—forty or fifty at the utmost; and for more than three-fourths of them it consisted of ladies; for they were morning lectures, and men of business had more important claims upon their time. Even of the ladies, very few felt a very earnest interest in the subject, or took the trouble to refer for more extensive knowledge to the literary or historical works I referred them to. But Longfellow in Cambridge, and Ticknor in Boston, with some of their distinguished literary friends, seldom failed to honour me; and their countenance was sufficient to satisfy me that anything I read out would be appreciated quite to the full extent of any merit I could detect in them myself.

But, however thin might be the attendance attracted by these lectures, the reputation they won for me in Boston was as astonishing as it was gratifying. The reporters of the town and country press seized upon them and gave large extracts or summaries of them from week to week; the most striking passages re-

gaining in type what they had lost by my imperfect delivery. For the whole of those spring months my lectures were the fashion, the rage, the *thing* of the season. And I was all the more a "lion" as I was less seen; seldom having time to go to town except in the discharge of my professional duties; and still more unfrequently accepting any invitation to those reunions and conversaziones, for which the choice society round the Boston common were especially renowned.

About these lectures, however, I shall have nothing more to say. I took the MSS. with me when I left New for Old England. I polished up and re-arranged them so as to offer them as a series of essays to the editor of a magazine in London; from whose pages, again, they came out as a two-volume book, the first I ever published in English.*

Meanwhile the 1st of April came, and with it, punctual to a minute, out came the April number of the *North American Review*, producing as Article iv. "that old lecture of mine" on "Maria Louisa, Duchess of Parma," which I had written and delivered at

* "Italy, General Views of its History and Literature, in Reference to its Present State." Two vols. 8vo. London, 1841. Saunders and Otley. "Italy, Past and Present." Two vols. 8vo. London, 1844 John Chapman.

Cambridge, in December. A presentation copy was sent to me as one of the contributors, with the Editor's compliments, and the expression of a hope that I should soon favour them again with some of my productions; a request with which I repeatedly complied during my stay in that part of the world.*

Besides these articles, I also wrote one for the *Christian Examiner*, a monthly publication which was then the principal organ of the Unitarian sect throughout the land, and was edited by Dr. James Walker, the eminent preacher, who, the reader may remember, was one of my earliest acquaintances when I settled in Charlestown—a journal which handled theological subjects with a freedom to which even Republican Yankeeland was hardly yet accustomed.

My ideas of literary life were as yet vague and fanciful, and that first rapid success fairly lifted me off my feet. Because my articles were printed by the side of those of men of acknowledged eminence, I began to look upon myself as one of them; and I fondly conceived that I had already reached some

* *North American Review*, No. xcix., April, 1838. "Maria Louisa, Duchess of Parma," No. c., July, 1838. "Romantic Poetry in Italy," No. ciii., April, 1839. "Italian Historians," etc.

+ *Christian Examiner*, No. xc., "Catholicism in Italy."

standing in the American world of letters ; a conceit which, considering that I had only been little more than eighteen months in the country, and had learnt in it all I knew of the language, was not altogether unnatural or unpardonable.

What especially contributed to foster my self-delusion was the benevolent familiarity with which I was treated by men, whose acquaintance would have been in itself a signal honour—by William Prescott, for instance, who, then in his forty-second year, had just published his “History of Ferdinand and Isabella,” poor blind Prescott, a hero in his love of work, toiling at a task for which his gloomy infirmity would have unfitted almost any other man, yet to which he was constant to his dying day. That poor blind hero, always patient and unweary, resigned and cheerful, as is the wont of blind men ! He admitted me into his sanctum, among his few visitors, and delighted to talk to me about his pursuits, and the difficulties he had to struggle with, relying as he did on the help of amanuenses whose knowledge of the languages of the many books which had to be consulted, was by no means as general and thorough as he had made his own.

As a striking contrast, it was pleasant to pass from
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Prescott's darkened study to the sunny library of his friend and biographer, George Ticknor, three years his senior, yet destined long to survive him. Ticknor, a wealthy patron, as well as a laborious cultivator of letters. Ticknor, always bright and sanguine, as he appears in his memoirs; genial, sociable, hospitable. He also was busy at work, and a work of love—"The History of Spanish Literature"—a work which was to last him all his lifelong; but which he took up leisurely, determined to bring it to an end in due time, but no less bent on enjoying life all the while, and ready to drop it from hour to hour to welcome his morning callers, with whom he would walk up and down his lofty apartments in Park Street, looking out on the common in his dressing-gown and velvet skull-cap, inexhaustible in his wit and pleasantry, and in his knowledge of men and things.

Still the most intimate of my distinguished friends in Boston at this time was Dr. Samuel Howe, of the Blind, Deaf, and Dumb Asylum, who bade me stay to lunch when my lecture was over, and showed me all the wonders of that charitable institution which was both a home and a world to him. He was still unmarried at that time, and rather prematurely given up by the ladies of his acquaintance as a confirmed

bachelor. Some of his "good-natured" friends also described him as "a man of one idea," in other words, a bore, because all his time and all his soul were engrossed with the one object of making the blind, the deaf, the dumb, to see, to hear, and speak. He had just at that time accomplished one of his greatest miracles by the education of his pet pupil, Laura Bridgman, that girl born blind, deaf, and dumb, whose acquirements three years later had the good fortune to be brought to the world's notice in the "American Notes," and won the doctor the reputation of the American Abbé de l'Épée. The doctor brought me before this young creature which had come into his hands, her mind a blank, and asked, "what, if left to its own resources, would have become of this immortal soul, thus immured in its dark dungeon of flesh, as impervious to light and sound as it was before its birth ?

"What was this soul?" again he asked. "What was this dim self-consciousness which he had been able to reach through all obstructions by mechanic means as simple and obvious as the rope by which strangers are hoisted up into some of the doorless and windowless monasteries of the Levant? What is spirit? and what is matter? Is not all that surrounds

us, all this visible and tangible world, matter? And are not the senses through which matter is manifested to us also matter? Is not matter the beginning and end of all human knowledge?

"And yet, is there not something within us that enables us to see deeper into matter than our unguided and unaided senses teach us? Is it not by material means that our knowledge transcends the limits within which our senses are circumscribed? Behold! The combination of a few pieces of glass will show us millions of stars—millions of worlds—which God seemed to have placed infinitely beyond our ken. And by means equally simple and obvious, by addressing this poor dear girl through the only senses vouchsafed to her, I am making a rational being of a creature who seemed doomed by the Creator to a condition beneath that of the lowest brute."

Then he looked up to heaven, and exclaimed: "What is man that he should thus dare to mend so much that is wrong in God's world? And what is God that He should create or allow so much that is wrong in His world—so much more than man can ever hope to mend? Why is not man more powerful—more godly? Why is not God more merciful—more human?"

With such arduous questions did the poor doctor busy and torment himself as he went about doing good. The most daring scepticism and the most ardent religion were at war in his mind. He was looking for the solution of those problems about the nature of the human soul, and of the Soul of the universe—about the goodness of God and the existence of evil—which will never be solved; never, at least, till we stand on the threshold of a future life—that life which is in itself the greatest riddle.

CHAPTER XI.

BECALMED.

Dead Sea apples—Weariness—Disappointment—Longing for change
—Choice of a trade—Teaching—Lecturing—Writing—The Press
—A precarious existence—Boston to Philadelphia—Girard College — Means and ends — Nicholas Biddle — Financing—An American panic—Philadelphia to New York—Italians in New York—New York to Boston—Boston to Washington.

WE were in mid-April, 1838. My last lecture had been delivered ; my first article in the *North American Review* had come out. The lectures had been applauded. I had been asked to repeat them at New Haven, at Providence, at Springfield, Massachusetts. There was even a scheme of getting up a class for them in New York. The *Review* article had been praised ; large extracts had been reproduced in all the newspapers. The editors of that *Review* and of other journals were “asking for more.” And, in the meantime I had more applications for private lessons

than I could attend to. I had the choice of my pupils, of the best educated and most interesting. I had the entrance into the most desirable social circles, rejoiced in the friendship of the most estimable men, basked in the smiles of the loveliest women ; I was passing rich for all my wants, and had laid by a few hundred dollars for a rainy day. My success was complete ; my object attained ; "and yet I was not happy."

Are there happy beings in this world ? At all events, I felt I was not, and could never be, one of them. I should have been at a loss to say what ailed me ; but something was wanting for my full contentment. And that is what I have always experienced in every phase of my life ; my delight was in the eagerness of the battle, but there was invariably something cloying in the enjoyment of the victory.

Some of the causes of my discontent at this particular crisis it would not be difficult for me to analyse.

In the first place I had missed my career ; for I had never wished to be a teacher, a lecturer, or a writer of magazine articles. Fond as I was of reading, my instincts were not at all literary. I found

even the mere mechanical task of writing very irksome ; and was, like a bad workman, apt to quarrel with my tools—pen, ink, and paper. I grudged even the time I had to give to inevitable private correspondence ; and how could I have any ambition to write for the public, or, forsooth, for posterity ? I had great difficulty in expressing myself to my own satisfaction in my native tongue ; what toil must it not be to clothe my thoughts in foreign idioms ? It was not with such expectations that I had come across seas. I had to give up all hope of being a soldier ; but I was still a patriot, a man of action.

“ *Pulchrum est bene facere reipublicæ ; Etiam bene dicere haud absurdum est.* ” But I reversed Sallust’s saying, and insisted that it might be very well to write for one’s country, but it was more manly to fight for it, if not as a soldier, at least as a volunteer—a free rifle—in a guerilla warfare. I was anxious to keep up all my physical energies, and how was that compatible with the sedentary pursuits of a teacher or author ?

But, even independent of such aspirations, I had some special objections to every branch of my present occupation. Teaching was to me obnoxious, because a man is not in that trade solely responsible for his

success, as he is in many other branches of business. Teaching, like quarrelling, takes two ; and, justly or unjustly, the master is only too commonly made to bear the blame of an unapt or unwilling pupil. And with respect to lecturing, to say nothing of my reluctance to show my face ; to say nothing of my foreign accent, of my unconquerable shyness, the business seemed to me little more dignified than that of a strolling player or itinerant musician, or that of an Italian Capuchin crack-preacher, carrying his *quaresimale*, or set of Lent sermons, from place to place, like a mountebank or vendor of quack medicines. The subject of my lectures had already seemed to me unsuited to many of my audience, even in Boston, the capital of American intelligence and culture. How could I reproduce those same lectures among the more benighted denizens of small provincial towns or among the corn-growing and pork-salting cities of the Far West ? And as for taking up any new subject, I was as incapable of writing about any other matter than Italy as Anacreon was of singing anything but love.

There remained literature in the stricter sense of the word. But I saw a great difference between a writer and a mere scribbler. I was not so vain as to feel conscious of such powers within me as might

enable me to write a novel—the only kind of composition likely to “pay” in our days. I speak, of course, of a good novel; for I see no reason why such a production should not be of as great a value as a good drama or epic poem. But if *good* I could not write, *bad* I would not; and mediocrity in literature or art is detested of gods and men. And there is that peculiar evil in the novels of our time, that he who has been successful in one is tempted by love of gain to go on from tale to tale, insuring a hard-won bread at the cost of failing health, wasting brain, and waning fame.

All I might have aspired to was to be a mere drudge in the daily, weekly, or monthly press; and was such a life worth living? The elation I experienced in seeing myself in print by the side of first-rate writers in the *North American Review* was an evanescent feeling. On reflection I perceived that a literary journal was something like a *coterie* or club, in which great men for their own purposes find it convenient to associate with little ones. These latter are simply dwarfed by the contrast arising from juxtaposition. It is in the nature of all academies in the long run not to raise but to bring down all capacities to a common level. Moreover

nine-tenths of the American periodical literature were either theological or political; and I was too earnest on religious topics to engage in controversies that too often seemed to me mere cavil or quibble, and was too ignorant of American politics or cared too little about them, to see much difference in those "Republican" and "Democratic," "*Whig*," and "*Locofoco*" parties, between which the war of words was then raging. It must be confessed, also, that my disposition was by no means buoyant or sanguine. I might well defy the frowns, but never trusted the smiles of fortune. I was seldom downhearted in actual struggle, but was apt to take the gloomiest view of the future. I had been almost miraculously enabled to earn a decent, indeed, what I considered for myself, a handsome livelihood, but I had done it by carrying on lessons, lectures, and magazine articles at the same time. None of the three trades would have been sufficient to support me, as the time that was taken up by one would leave but little leisure to attend to the others. I had accomplished the task by strenuous exertions for a season; but I was by no means sure that my mind would stand the same strain for another.

I talked the matter over with my never-failing

friend, Governor Everett, himself a nervous man, only too ready to sympathise with me in my despondency. I am not sure that there was not in his mind some doubt as to my sanity ; but he listened to me with heroic patience ; tried to place himself in my position, and entered into all my plans.

“ It was certainly most unfortunate,” he allowed, “ that I had come to America under erroneous impressions ; that I had been flattered with false hopes of finding on my arrival a ready-made, permanent employment. The place I looked forward to in Harvard College did not exist. The one that would have been next to it was not vacant. But Harvard was not the only academical institution in America. There was Yale, and Bowdoin, and Jefferson—and, by-the-way, the newest, the grandest, best endowed—to be sure ; why should I not try Girard College ? ”

Girard College, let it be. One of Mr. Everett’s best friends was Mr. Nicholas Biddle, in his youth his fellow-student, now settled in Philadelphia, a man of high repute and prodigious influence in that city, who had a hand in whatever was going on there, and was, to Mr. Everett’s certain knowledge, one of the trustees of the Girard College Fund. A letter from Mr. Everett was soon written ; my preparations for a journey

at no period of my life took more than an hour's time. By a few hastily scribbled notes I took a fortnight's leave of absence of my pupils, and on that same evening, April 15th, 1838, I took the night train to Providence and New York, and twenty-fours later I alighted at a good hotel in the "City of Brotherly Love."

Girard College took its name from Stephen Girard, to whose posthumous beneficence it was indebted for its foundation. This Girard was a native of France, who had in youth crossed the seas as a supercargo in a Bordeaux vessel, and had settled in Philadelphia in a trading and banking business, which, in his hands, turned out so profitable that he found himself at his death in possession of a capital of 15,000,000 dollars. Of this colossal fortune he disposed by will chiefly for the benefit of the cities of New Orleans and Philadelphia, assigning for this latter 5,000,000 dollars as the endowment of a school for the education and support of destitute orphans, natives of the place. He was very strict and particular about his instructions. The Girard Institution was to be a school, it was to be lodged in a plain brick building, it was to supply only the most elementary knowledge, and none were to be admitted as pupils except born citizens of Philadelphia, orphans,

and unprovided with any other means of education. The use of Hercules' clubs to crush a fly hardly suggests a more forcible idea of disproportion of the means to the end, than was manifest in the plan so minutely laid out for the application of a legacy intended to perpetuate the memory of the posthumously munificent Bordelais.

On the ground of the impossibility of complying with its conditions Girard's will was attacked by some of his relatives (for when is a rich man without kindred, however remote ?) and ran the risk of being set aside as the deed of a mere idiot. But the magistrates of the Quaker City were too strongly interested in the welfare of their fellow-citizens to allow their share of the Girard inheritance to be snapt from them by a mere lawyer's chicane. They decreed that the spirit and not the letter of the deceased's mind should be interpreted, and that the city should be endowed with such an educational establishment as the testator's funds had provided for. Instead of one plain brick building they reared five huge edifices of fine white marble, occupying with their grounds forty acres in extent ; the central edifice, a Corinthian temple 218 feet long, 160 feet wide, and 90 feet high, with a colonnade of 32 columns, 55 feet high, and each 6 feet in diameter, all round it.

My first steps on the morning after my arrival were directed to this monster college or commercial school (for the city was already endowed with a flourishing university), and I stood with amazement in sight of this magnificent colonnade, emulous of the Parthenon, fancying in anticipation the pride I should feel were I soon to tread that marble threshold as a member of some of the faculties that were to come into being—for the professors were sure to be forthcoming, wherever the pupils might be found.

From the college at a suitable hour I proceeded to the residence of the Honourable Nicholas Biddle, and was immediately admitted into his presence, in a ground-floor parlour, where he had just finished his breakfast. I handed him Mr. Everett's letter, and stood scanning his features and figure while he was reading.

He was a man scarcely past the middle age, with a thick head of hair, the colour of which left me in doubt whether it had always been so in youth, or whether it had “grown white in a single night as men's have grown from sudden fears.” He was about my own height (five feet eight inches), as it seemed while we thus stood face to face; a noble presence with a high forehead, with large light-gray eyes, a

Roman nose, and a broad, square *torso*; but withal a pale flabby look, deep furrows at the temples, and a stoop at the shoulders; all the symptoms of an enfeebled constitution and energies nearly exhausted.

Nicholas Biddle had been a successful and highly popular man in his generation. He had been for several years, and was still at the head of the "United States Bank," and was looked upon as a king of financiers in an age and country in which financing had been carried to the verge of insane and even criminal recklessness; and he had used the great talents for which men gave him credit, not so much to enrich himself, as to gain an unbounded ascendancy over his fellow citizens whom he managed to enrich. He took the lead in all kinds of venturous enterprise; was ever ready with his precept and practice, with sound advice and solid help, and for several years he steered so clear of all financial rocks and squalls as to insure for his judgment a confidence which he undoubtedly deserved by his disinterestedness and integrity.

Unfortunately America had, on the previous year, the never to be forgotten 1837, gone through the most terrible commercial crisis in the world, when, "as was alleged to be the belief of the best authori-

ties, every bank in the United States, without an exception (consequently also the United States Bank), had stopped payment." It was the inevitable consequence of that madness that seemed to have seized the whole community, and raised it to a height of unequalled but also ephemeral prosperity. It was a time when all the Eastern cities, and especially Philadelphia, mustered in their main streets almost more banks than shops; the banks, shining Grecian marble temples, pleasantly breaking the monotony of the common style of Dutch brick buildings. People clamoured for unbounded freedom of banking: Private Banks, Joint Stock Banks, Municipal Banks, Provincial Banks, State Banks, National Banks, with wide-spreading branches and no roots to them, sprang up everywhere. There was no limit to the issue of paper, no restraint to its circulation. We had ceased to look at or almost to count our notes. Notes from the Far West, from such localities as had never been heard of, the "Edens," the "Palmyras," the "Babylons" of humorous novelists, were spread all over the Union, and passed from hand to hand as if they had borne all the marks and superscription of the Bank of England. It was a perfect paper millennium; and what could not be done with paper, if there was only

enough of it? Paper for a cathedral or a theatre, a college or a monster hotel, for any colossal structure or gigantic enterprise. Paper for life and fire insurance, for insurance against accidents and infirmities—against everything, alas! except the consequences of men's own folly and extravagance, against the unavoidable day of reckoning; the panic, the bursting of the bubble, the collapse of banks with nothing but a paper foundation.

Of the great hubbub created throughout the country by this appalling catastrophe, some faint echo had reached even me in that obscure suburb of Charlestown, where was then my home; and I had been seized with surprise and dismay when going to settle my boot-maker's bill, and tendering a few notes which I had received as pure gold only on the eve from the Governor of Massachusetts, I was coolly informed that "they were of no more value than as many dry leaves of last year's fall." But I was then new to the country, I had my own troubles to think of, understood little and asked even less about public matters. Great, besides, as the panic had been, and the distress still was, in New England, the coolheaded, shrewd, and wary Yankee had less deeply dived into the slough of the common delusion, and was sooner able to emerge

from its foul waters. But the traces of the havoc the muddy flood had left became more distinctly evident at every step I went southward ; and they were especially manifest in this Quaker City, the bad faith of whose financiers was soon to become proverbial. Of all the rapid growth, but also of the awful crash of that fatal public hallucination, the reputed author was now before me.

Nicholas Biddle had been hailed as a second creator of Philadelphia ; he was now scouted as its destroyer. Nothing that was said of him could be bad enough. Ribald songs, befouling his name, were sung under his windows.* But he stood his ground calmly, manfully ; he had the consciousness of his rectitude to comfort him. He bowed his head to the storm, and allowed time for the clouds to disperse.

It was an awkward moment, anyhow, for any man to come to solicit his good-will ; and it has always

* Of one of these doggrels I have still a faint remembrance. It began :

“ Nicholas Biddle,
Hey, diddle-diddle !”

And ended :

“ Of Biddle hot and Biddle cold,
Of Biddle young and Biddle old,
Of Biddle tender, Biddle tough,
Thank thee, Lord ! we've had enough.”

been matter of surprise to me how Mr. Everett could have been so ignorant of the state of affairs in Philadelphia as to send me on such an errand at this juncture. But Everett was just then in a state of the greatest distraction about his own home politics. His strong-headed support of that obnoxious "Eighteen Gallons Bill," interfering with the retail sale of spirituous liquors, had set the whole publican and dram-drinking world against him. He had no leisure to look beyond the boundaries of his native State; he probably knew nothing of his friend Biddle's recent unpopularity; or, if he did, he thought his friend would be fully as able to despise vulgar clamour as he was himself.

Mr. Biddle lingered on the perusal of Everett's letter as if not knowing what to make of it. At last he looked up with a smile, held out his hand, bade me be seated, and spoke with an expression of benevolence that seemed to him habitual.

"Really, Signor Mariotti," he said, "I hardly know what to say to you. My friend, Governor Everett, must be strangely misinformed about this matter of Girard College. The College is there; you may have seen—you may see it from here, from this window. I am one of its trustees, to be sure; and its fund—

part of it, at least, is safe—as safe as any stock, scrip, or aught else may be considered safe nowadays. But how can we think of professors or professorships in these terrible straits? How could Everett dream of such things? Hard times are these, my dear sir. *Le bon temps viendra*, no doubt, but who knows when?"

"What, sir; the Girard legacy——?"

"The Girard legacy is safe, I tell you," he interrupted me hastily, "perfectly safe—as safe as everything is, or would be, if all men had not conspired to go mad at the same time. Better times will come; the panic is abating; confidence will revive—there never was cause for alarm—but in the meanwhile, while the craze lasts, nothing can be done."

"But, sir—but, sir!" I put in; "if anything could be done, at any time—I am in no particular hurry; I might afford to wait. Were there only some hope——"

"My dear signor," he cried, shaking his head, "I should be sorry to encourage the slightest hope. My colleagues of the Girard fund have been seized with the mania of embellishing their native city. I did my utmost to cure them of their folly; they would not listen to me. Who can tell how many hundred thou-

sand dollars have been sunk merely in the foundation of yon staring college buildings? The college is safe enough; the fund is lodged in very solid State securities. It is all as safe as our Independence Hall; as safe as the capitol at Washington. But meantime where is the money to pay the professors' salaries? Indeed, we do not know whether there will be either salaries or professors. The affair is still in court. It will be for the judges of the Supreme Court to decide. I should not wonder if we were made to pull down the buildings and refund the costs."

"In the meanwhile, sir, if you would kindly write down my name as a candidate for the chair of Italian Literature——"

"Italian Literature!" he again broke in in a little fit of impatience. "Do you think the Girard College is to be a young ladies' academy? Do you suppose we are going to have a second university here, as if the one we had already were not a sufficient burden on our resources? Girard College, my dear sir, is to be a commercial school; we do not know what kind of learning may be deemed fit for destitute orphans. There may be room for a plain teacher of French or German. But Italian! We do not expect Girard boys to turn out opera singers."

There was nothing more to be said. I took up my hat from the carpet and rose. He laid his hand on my arm with a gentle, benignant expression.

"My dear signor," he said, "I am very sorry to be so plain and explicit with you, but it would not be kindness to give you any false encouragement. My friend Everett speaks of you in such high terms! Had you come to me a twelvemonth ago—when I was King Biddle"—he smiled as he spoke the word. "In a town like Philadelphia it must," he continued, "go hard if no place could have been found for a man of your parts; but now, in all this turmoil, it is as much as I can do to escape lynching. I must be frank with you besides. Were it still in my power to do anything for an Italian, here is Signor Borsieri, your countryman, you know, one of the martyrs of Spielberg, it is for him I should feel bound to exert myself. Then there is Signor Interdonato, a Roman, the handsomest youth that ever came out of Italy, a learned youth, highly accomplished, all our ladies and young ladies running mad after him. All private lessons——"

"Forgive me, Mr. Biddle," I exclaimed somewhat bluntly, "I can have lessons enough in Boston. It was not as a private teacher that I came here for employment: I am infinitely obliged to you for your good-will,

and I am glad you thus nip any false expectation in the bud." With this we shook hands and I left him. I stood for a minute at the door looking up and down the street little knowing how to dispose of myself when the names of the Italians he had mentioned recurred to me. "Ha ! to be sure, Borsieri," I said, "one of our translators of Scott's novels. Why should I not go and see Borsieri ?" I had no difficulty in procuring his address, and I had the good fortune to find not only him at home but young Interdonato with him. I have not yet found an Italian in the world with whom I am not at my ease at first sight. We had not been five minutes together before we were the best friends. We went out and rambled for a few hours, my countrymen pointing out the "lions" of the place. We dined together, and sat till a late hour ; and when we said "good-night," it was upon the understanding that we should meet on the morrow at the station, my new friends having made up their minds to spend a few days with me at New York.

At New York there was at the time a little Italian colony : Borsieri found there Foresti and Castiglia, two of his fellow-prisoners from Spielberg, and with these and others we met in the evening in the house of Lorenzo da Ponte, a very aged, yet by no means a

decrepit man, whose recollections went back beyond the Napoleonic era, and who had been a successor of Metastasio and Casti as *Poeta Cesareo*, or laureate, at Vienna, where he had written the *libretto* for some of Rossini's operas. He had come to the New World as a political exile. He lived with one of his married daughters who did the honours of his house ; and that house was the resort of all Italians, no matter of what rank or condition, but especially literary or artistic, who could in any way contribute to its social entertainments. There never was an epoch in my life in which I did not feel young and lively when thrown into the company of my own countrymen. I used to stand still in the streets of Boston when the unfamiliar accents of our Italian dialect struck my ear, and it was as much as I could do to refrain from going up to the groups of half-t tipsy half-riotous Genoese or Neapolitan sailors from whom those voices proceeded, and offering to shake hands with them for our dear country's sake. It may easily be imagined what treat it was to me to meet so many of the better class of my own people, so far from home, and so many of them conspicuous for their talents, for their accomplishments and their free-and-easy, genial address. The Spielberg prisoners, especially that honourable band of martyrs who had

landed here with Maroncelli, and made their names and that of their country a household word in so many American homes, appealed to my best feelings; and no one more so than Felice Foresti, a man whose strength of character bore up most heroically against the cruel hardships of a fifteen years' imprisonment, and who showed none of those symptoms of broken health or impaired mental or moral faculties which were so manifest in poor Pelico, and in many of his fellow-sufferers. Poor Foresti! I stood at his death-bed, twenty years later, and regretted that all I had said of him in a chapter of one of my books had done so little towards making his great soul known among men.*

While we were in New York something occurred that gave us the opportunity of seeing that city in such a state of violent commotion as could scarcely have been caused by the most hard-contested Presidential Election. On the 28th of April, of that year, 1838, the *Sirius* came into harbour, and was followed by the *Great Western* in the afternoon of the same day; those being the first vessels which had steamed all the way across the Atlantic, thus accomplishing a feat of which Dr. Lardner and other scientific wisecracs

* "Italy Past and Present." Two vols., 1848. Vol. ii. p. 195.

were still demonstrating the absolute mathematical impossibility. Of the state of excitement into which this memorable event threw the New Yorkers and the whole Western world, I shall not here attempt a description, as I have had already a recent occasion to allude to the subject.*

My fortnight's holiday was soon over, and the end of it saw me again at my place as a teacher of languages in Boston and its environs. The little I had seen of the two larger cities of the Union, where my eye was wearied by the dreary sameness of those long, flat, straight streets, laid out as a chess-board with geometrical precision, and not to be threaded without some smattering of arithmetical knowledge — seemed to have endeared to me this plainer, but more home-like capital of "Old New England." I had already been sufficiently inoculated with what are called Yankee prejudices to feel that, if life could be made at all endurable in America, it was only in this "dear old Boston." But the question was, "why in America at all?"

The thing which I particularly admired and loved in Boston was (what I considered) its genuine English character. I looked on these emancipated colonies as

* "South America," London, 1880. Chapter XII., p. 230.

merely the semi-rural purlieus of the great community from which they had sprung. “Why should I tarry in a suburb if I could make my way into the heart and soul of the city?” Such was the question I was incessantly putting to myself. New England was very well in itself. But my very first yearning, when Italy was closed against me, was towards Old England.

Whatever had at first charmed and indeed dazzled me in the success of my professional and literary career had now lost all its zest. I worked as hard as before. But I looked on my present employment only as a means to an end. The problem was how to do so well in America as to lay by the few hundreds of dollars that would take me to England. “What avails it to have placed one’s self among the first—nay, what would it avail even to be the very first of writers in this country,” I asked, “in a country where political emancipation has riveted and aggravated the fetters of intellectual dependence; where hardly one thought ever springs up in an American brain that has not been filtered into it from the mass of ideas coming in with every batch of pirated editions of English publications? My views on the subject were the reverse of those of Cæsar. Rather than first in a provincial

town I would choose to be last in Rome ; and England was then—even if it were no longer now—the Rome of the Anglo-Saxon literary world.

Full of these thoughts, I went through the summer months ; and, as the scattering of my fashionable pupils to their favourite watering places left me at leisure, I called upon the man who was indeed my friend, whose patience and indulgence had hitherto been proof against all my whims and vagaries : I called upon Mr. Everett at the governor's office in the State House, and unfolded to him all the sad tale of my yearning for a change of life.

He listened to me for a long time, as was his wont, with downcast eyes. When I had done, he looked up ; he shook his head ; he smiled, he showed me such pity as one might feel for a spoilt child, or a harmless monomaniac. At last he tried the charm of his soothing tones—those tones that had thrilled so many hearts in his young days when he spoke from the pulpit.

“ My dear young friend ! ” he said, “ there is something morbid in your aspirations ; something unnatural in your wishes ; allow me to say, something *perverse* in your Italian temperament. What would you, what could you do in England ? Do you not

see that all the tendencies of mankind are westward ? That it is for the New World to supply the wants that cannot be satisfied in the Old ? To go back to Europe in quest of what you do not find in America is merely to attempt to swim against the stream.

“Why will you not believe me ?” he went on. “I tell you, you have not yet given this country a fair trial. You know nothing of the vastness of its resources, of the rapid pace of its development. If you think you have not sufficient elbow-room with us, rather than look eastwards, why should you not go further west ?”

“West, Mr. Everett ?” I exclaimed, in utter astonishment. “West ! why, where should I go ? What should I do ?”

“See the country,” he said, with warmth ; “know the men, more or less, as you did when, Ulysses-like, you crossed the seas and came to us in quest of adventures. There are a thousand things a man—a real man—can do in the West. And you know it is no discredit to anyone in this country to change his occupation when he hopes to give a turn to the wheel of his fortunes. Look at Pierpoint ! He has been a banker’s clerk, a lawyer, a physician, and is now the Reverend John Pierpoint, a divine. And he is not

more than forty years old, and he has been, all the time, no mean poet."

"Nor is he the only specimen of his kind," I put in, with a bow, in allusion to the fact that he himself, Everett, had in his life put his hand to many trades.

"Nor is he the only one, as you say," he assented. "There is Elihu Burritt, the literary blacksmith, an academician when he doffs his leather apron. There is Dowse, the tanner, whom they have dubbed *LL.D.* (Learned Leather Dresser), because he sticks to his workshop at Cambridge Port, though he has taken his degrees at Cambridge College. Your Italian merchants of Venice and Florence declared that trade did not soil noble hands; our citizen thinks that literature does not hamper honest trade."

"Can there be a doubt of it?" I cried.

"Go and ask the question in Chestnut Street," he replied. "There are still prejudices about birth and race among some of our Boston ten thousand. But there are none in the Far West. The West is the great chemical laboratory for the amalgamation and assimilation of all human tribes. I think with your robust health and restless spirit you—were you of Teutonic blood—would make a first-rate pioneer. Still,

Latin as you are, even you could find your place in the West."

"Have you such a place for me?" I asked.

"I think I have. Listen to me. I was talking about you, the other day, to Mr. Bell, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, an old friend of mine, who came up from Washington to consult me about the education of his boys. He is a New Englander by birth, but married a Western lady, and is now a great landowner and statesman in Tennessee. He has some great plans about the foundation of a new college or university in Nashville. He takes a great interest in you. From what I said to him, he thinks you could lend him a hand in the furtherance of his schemes. He told me how glad he would be to see you in Washington: how happy to take you home with him during the recess of Congress which is about to begin. Had not chance brought you here to-day I should have sent for you to give you his message. Why should not you go? Why not consider his proposal? He has two sons whom he thinks too young for college life. Perhaps he has some idea that he may induce you to make Nashville your home. That need not be for long: you will have the whole West to look to for a sphere of your activity,

and a powerful friend to back you in all your undertakings."

He stopped as if he had done ; he got up, and walked a few steps up and down, then seeing I made no sign he came back to me, and concluded : " My dear friend, is there any harm in trying ? It will be a break in the monotony of your existence ; it need not interfere with any of your pursuits here. At the worst look upon it as a mere holiday trip ; you will see what is really a new, a great, an interesting country. I daresay, Mr. Bell, at your time of life, when he first went there, had not half the advantages of your education and of your experiences of the world, yet you may see him now at the very top of the ladder. It will be worth your while to learn how the thing was done."

" You take away my breath, Mr. Everett," I said after an awkward pause ; " the temptation is strong, and, as you say, Mr. Bell's offer binds me to nothing. Pray give me just an hour to think of it."

So saying I rose, left him, walked about an hour round the common, then went back to the State House, cried " Done ! " and two days later I was calling at Mr. Bell's house in Washington.

CHAPTER XII.

THE OLD FAR WEST.

Washington to Nashville—My host and fellow-traveller—His wife—Our conveyance—Our route—West Virginia—The Alleghanies Mountain scenery—Forest scenery—Roads—Inns—My host's views and mine—Conflicting expectations—Nashville—Western life—Manners—Slavery—A Western senator—The way back—A hard journey—Kentucky justice—Killing, no murder.

WE were not long detained in Washington. Mr. Bell had already made all preparations for his homeward journey, and would equally set out with or without me. He, however, professed himself delighted to see me, and hearing that I was an absolute stranger to the place, he said he would allow me the whole of that day to see the wonders of that famous “City of Magnificent Distances.”

It was then twelve o'clock at noon. He drove me once or twice up and down the dusty wilderness of Pennsylvania Avenue, showed me all over the Capitol at one end and the White House at the other, regretting

that a slight indisposition of the President, Martin Van Buren, would deprive me of the honour of an introduction to the "Little Dutchman;" and when we alighted at the hotel door at two o'clock, the dinner hour, he assured me I could congratulate myself on having *done* my Washington.

On the morrow, July 30th, 1838, we were to turn our faces to the West. At ten in the morning Mr. Bell's travelling barouche, with two tall and powerful New Hampshire trotters, drove up. Mr. Bell placed me in the post of honour beside his wife and sat himself on the back seat, reserving the privilege of exchanging that place for one in the coach-box beside the negro driver, Catilina, or "Cat," as soon as we should be out in the open country, and as often and as long as the glaring and scorching sun would allow it. A heavier conveyance with a mountain of luggage and the lady's maid, page, and pet spaniel, were to follow in our rear.

The Honourable John Bell, Speaker of the Hall of Representatives, was still a youngish man; not quite forty; middle-sized, rather stout and round-visaged; with a double chin; florid; sanguine and somewhat noisy; a picture of good humour and good nature to all outward seeming, yet with deep lines between the

eyebrows, and a gleaming light in the dark gray eyes which might be taken as symptoms of a lurking hot temper, and of a strong domineering self-will.

Mrs. Bell was a few years older than her husband : tall, thin, bony ; with a complexion as dark as it might be without suggesting a suspicion of the presence even of one drop of African blood in her veins ; with no other pretensions to personal attractiveness than a pair of large, dark, gipsy-like eyes, and the softest, most winning voice that was ever vouchsafed to any of that sex, in whom that gift is thought to be “an excellent thing.” There was a weary lackadaisical look about the lady, which prompted at first the idea that she was a somewhat bullied and sat-upon wife ; an impression which on a few days’ closer acquaintance was found to be erroneous, the reverse being rather the case.

From Washington, in the district of Columbia, to Nashville, the capital of Tennessee, the distance was about 720 miles. The weather was hot ; the roads in some parts very primitive ; and the horses, however valiant, could not be expected to travel at the rate of more than twenty to thirty miles a day, so that the journey, including necessary stoppages, would not last much less than a month.

It was on the whole a most enjoyable trip. Our route lay across the mountainous region of the Alleghanies, a succession of parallel chains, which under the various names of Blue Ridge, Laurel Ridge, Alleghany Crest, Cumberland Range, etc., stretch from N.E. to S.W. for a length of 1200 miles across the continent, tracing in some parts the political and everywhere the natural boundary between the Eastern or maritime and the inland or Western States.

My recollections of the journey, at so great a distance of time, and where neither note or sketch-book was kept in aid of a most treacherous memory, must necessarily be faint and vague. I have only a distinct idea that, after crossing the Potomac, I was shown on our left Mount Vernon, George Washington's cradle and grave; after which we passed Charlottesville and Lynchburg; and hence struck across a charming country, winding round the skirts of isolated hills, many of them of a conical shape; then threaded up and down many a glen and dale, till we came to the pass across what seemed the uppermost chain; then down we went along a broad valley between the Bald or Iron Mountains and the Cumberland Range, crossing from Virginian into Kentuckian territory, till I was told that we stood on Tennessee ground, that the river

was the Holston, the town before us Knoxville, and we had still 160 miles before we should reach Nashville.

For a man who had ascended the Valais and walked across the Furca and St. Gothard Passes to the Lombard lakes, and who had, besides, strolled round the northern projections of the African Atlas, the Alleghanies had not much that could call forth enthusiastic admiration on the score of sublimity. The country we crossed, though mountainous, had nothing like the awful majesty of Alpine peaks or moraines ; nothing like the picturesque wildness of the cliffs and crags of the Apennines. The scenery was comparatively tame and sober ; a milder kind of Arcadia. Though some of the culminating points of the Alleghanies are said to rise to a height of 6000 feet, the hills around us, and the crests before us, never seemed to attain gigantic dimensions, for the ascent was gradual, the mountain-sides were a mass of green, all wooded up to the summit, smooth and sound ; something like the banks of the Wye Valley or of Windermere Lake, but without any of the hanging rocks, yawning chasms, abrupt precipices, and other striking features diversifying and magnifying a grand Alpine landscape.

On the other hand, these mountains had none of the baldness and barrenness, of the bleakness and desolation which time and man's wanton and stolid destructiveness have wrought in many of the highland regions of the Old World. I say, had not *then*; for the Americans were soon to outstrip the very worst savages in Europe in their senseless and ruthless detestation of trees. At the time I was travelling, the dilapidation had barely begun. The land was still mantled with a vegetation apparently untouched since the first day of creation.

Everywhere the silence and solitude, the solemnity and sublimity of the primeval forest encompassed us. Everywhere the tall and straight timber of oak and ash, cedar and maple, hemlock and hickory, shot up aloft; here emerging from the tangle of an impervious thicket; there clear of all undergrowth, like the columns of some great temple, the shafts supporting a vault-like canopy of dense foliage, the abode of perpetual shade and coolness in the summer months.

Hour after hour and day after day we toiled along the mere track or sketch of a road hastily and clumsily cut between two uninterrupted, interminable forest walls. On we drove, seeing little of man and his works; little of the ruthless war he was waging against

the stupendous work of nature ; for the population was as yet scanty and sparse ; the settlements few and far between ; and we were often at no little pains to reckon our distances, and to husband our horses' strength, so as to make sure of a bed and supper at the close of a weary day's march.

Our resting-places for the night, however, were not as uncomfortable as the general aspect of the country would have led us to anticipate. For this was the only track from east to west on this latitude. We came not unexpected, because the break-up of the Houses of Congress set many of the western Honourables on their homeward way. They all travelled on one another's footsteps, and brought with them tidings of each other's movements. Mr. Bell was well known on the road, and all our hosts were his friends, all accustomed to address him formally and with profound deference, though on the terms of Republican equality. Whatever life had hitherto developed itself in these still primitive districts clung to this main artery of circulation. The barrack-like court-house of each embryo county town ; the barn-like church of every parish ; the homestead of the landowner, the ploughman's or herdsman's farmyard, the blacksmith's, wheelwright's,

or general shop, all clustered together at the ferry, at the foot of a steep hill, at the spring of good drinking water—whenever, in short, necessity or choice determined the traveller to come to the end of his day's stage.

It would be interesting to revisit these remote Alleghany districts and see the improvements the lapse of nearly two generations may have effected. But at the time of my journey, August, 1838, they still exhibited many of the features of pioneers' life. The land had been seized by immigrants from the Maritime States, where it was held of little account by the owners of tobacco, cotton, and other plantations relying for existence on negro labour. It was for a long time the refuge of the "mean whites" of the South, and of the lawyers and parsons, pedlars, and land-sharks of the North. But it was marvellous to see the fertility of the virgin soil of those clearings. There had been no time to cut down the trees; their gigantic stems were still everywhere cumbering the ground, charred or bleached, as they had been hastily half-burnt or "girdled," withering on their roots with all their bare branches sprawling in the air, and looking like a forest of portentous ghosts as we passed them in the twilight or moonlight; yet between

those trunks, and amidst that wreck, broad patches of Indian corn were struggling into existence, growing to a height and luxuriance to which even the richest flats of my native North Italian region have nothing to compare. Flocks and herds, though ill-tended, were glorious. Lack of bread and meat was unknown here, and in the houses where hospitality was tendered, although in most instances mere log huts, there was an air of plenty, comfort and even neatness, which the roughness of the road and the backward look of the country had fully prepared us to appreciate. The arrival of any traveller, especially of so distinguished a guest as the Speaker of the House of Representatives, was the event of the day. The sight of the barouche as it emerged between the trees where the road-track widened out into the clearing, sounded the death-knell of the fat fowl, yearling lamb, or sucking-pig, which was, all smoking hot, to grace our board, barely one hour after its obsequies. Anything more deliciously tender than that freshly-killed meat, with the corn-cobs, hot rolls, sweet potatoes, and other nameless delicacies that those Western wilds provided, could not have been more welcome to appetites whetted by a long day's fast and the rapid cooling of the night air. Some

kind of rough and ready hospitality was freely and cordially extended to all the passers-by. But the luxury of the State apartments, and the honour of the company, or of the assiduous attention of the host and his family at table, were reserved for the "quality," for those, that is, who could afford, in return, something besides an account of the current prices of the Eastern markets, or the common gossip of the day. It was in the familiarity of these after-dinner, or after-supper entertainments, when all the local quidnuncs gathered round the house-porch to smoke and hear what was going on in the world, that Mr. Bell showed to the best advantage. It was then that I was best able to form an opinion of his character. For in our intercourse along the road little was said between us. The heat in the narrow valleys was intense. My companions slept a great part of the way, and I read or outstripped the lumbering barouche in its progress, getting on alone on foot enjoying the novelty of the scene, and the company of my own thoughts.

Mr. Bell might pass in his own, and his neighbour's estimation, for an educated man, for he had been for three years at college when he made up his mind to emigrate, and settled as a lawyer in the Western town

which he had now the honour to represent in Congress. He was sharp and witty, astonishingly ready with his tongue, and rich in all those gifts which should qualify him for a stump orator; wide-awake on all matters in which the interest of his person, or the politics of his party might be at stake. As a born Yankee transplanted into slave soil, he was a rabid democrat, an out-and-out advocate of the slave-owner's rights, and stood up in defence even of the deeds of blood and fire by which some of the Southern roughs had punished the rashness of some abolitionists who had ventured to establish themselves and their printing-presses too close to the boundaries of "Dixie's Land."

To this fierce and uncompromising partisanship—the blind zeal of a convert—Mr. Bell was in a great measure indebted for the rapid career he had gone through as a public man, a career which, as he had flattered himself, might some day, under favourable auspices, win him sufficient votes in the South-Western States to give him the victory in a presidential contest. For these were still the days of Andrew Jackson: The actual president, Martin Van Buren, who had succeeded the old hero of New Orleans in 1837, shaped his policy upon instructions he received from Jackson's retreat at the Hermitage, and with such servility that copper

cent. tokens were in circulation caricaturing him under the shape of a donkey walking with his nose close to the ground, under which was quoted the first sentence in the new President's inaugural message : "I follow in the footsteps of my illustrious predecessor." The interests of the Slave Party, of the South and South-west, and especially of the State of Tennessee, where old Hickory lived in retirement, were in the ascendant, and the fortunes of the Speaker of the House of Representatives, who was one of Jackson's champions, might be expected to rise or sink with them.

The first impression I made on this successful statesman was, I believe, by no means favourable, nor can I say that his opinion of me improved on closer acquaintance. He looked upon me as a weakling, a poor creature from the Old World—a world his contempt for which was commensurate with his profound and outrageous ignorance of it. All the unknown was to him the reverse of magnificent. Nothing could be imagined more contracted or distorted than the sphere of his ideas on any subject not immediately connected with his every-day's business or experience, for he was no reader; he had never travelled out of the track we were now pursuing. Such learning as

he had hastily and crudely crammed into his brain at college had soon leaked out during the first years of his grovelling legal practice, and his mind was of so stubborn a nature that it shunned and repelled any knowledge at variance with his preconceived and exaggerated notions. His was the blindness and deafness of the man determined not to see or hear. You would have said, if you listened to him, that there had never been such things as law or order, progress or freedom, in the world before the declaration of independence of the United States. You would have said that the Union was self-created, and America self-discovered, so strong was his conceit that there was nothing in the world but America ; nothing in America but the West, nothing in the West but Tennessee, and nothing even in Tennessee but what he had made, or was going to make it.

The conversation between me and Mrs. Bell (Bellinda, as her husband facetiously called her, though she had been christened Susannah) was also monotonous, but its one topic was not political or social, but purely domestic. Her mind seemed all wrapt up in her two boys, who constituted all her family, and in whose favour she was most anxious to prepossess me. "The eldest," she informed me, "was

only sixteen, and there was only a twelvemonth between him and his younger brother. The father," she added, "objected to their company during the session at Washington, and of course he was the master, and her wishes were always subordinate to his pleasure."

Mr. Bell was nodding on his seat opposite to us but with his eyes half open, and she could not be sure whether he heard or not, but at all events she knew these were the words that would please him best.

"The consequence," she continued, "was that the boys were left very much to their own devices, though entrusted as pupils to the care of Dr. Timothy Winter—an orthodox minister from Connecticut, a good man, but who does not understand them and cannot get along with them. Only imagine!" she said, warming up with maternal anger, "the brute offered to flog them, as if they were niggers, and he wrote me there had been a shindy; that the eldest, Herbert, a strapping lad, nearly as tall as his father, would not stand that but had seized his pewter inkstand and threatened to fling it at his (the doctor's) head. And, fancy!" she added, waxing still more indignant, "the idiot goes on arguing that to spare the rod is to spoil the child—as if Herbert and Rupert were mere children—and

that he had no other course, and all that nonsense. But I answered him short and straight that the Speaker would not hear of it; that he was glad his boy had shown a proper spirit; that his sons were to grow up as American citizens, and that if anybody was to box their ears, it was only for him, the father, to do it. And so the boys had to be allowed to run wild for this month or two. Some of the Speaker's friends advised him to send the boys to college; and it was with that view that Mr. Bell ran up to Boston, where he saw Mr. Everett. But he came back convinced that Harvard College—where he (my husband) himself graduated—was now but a ‘one-horse concern,’ and he said that his boys would soon have better instruction at Franklin College and the University at Nashville. So the Speaker told Mr. Everett; and it is to the circumstance of that interview between the two gentlemen that we are indebted for the pleasure of your company on this journey.”

Sweet as was the lady’s voice, her words had no very agreeable sound to my ear; for they implied a conviction on her part that my instalment at her house in Nashville, in charge of her sons, was a settled matter, and to be taken for granted; and all she added about her boys “being angels, very lambs in

the hands of any one who would not stroke them the wrong side of the hair," seemed intended to rivet the chains in which she thought her husband held me.

I was greatly taken aback by the glibness and assurance with which the good lady seemed to dispose of the matter. She set me wondering whether her conviction that I was already booked to Tennessee, permanently and irretrievably bound to Nashville and to her cubs' schoolroom, was merely an innocent delusion on her part; whether her wish was father to the thought—or whether that notion rested on anything that her husband had let fall in the intimacy of their conjugal intercourse. But, for my own part, I felt confident that I was travelling as a free man, and that any decision as to my longer or shorter stay in the West was not to be made a matter for discussion —far less to be taken for granted—till I had had some time to look about myself at the end of the journey.

Mr. Everett had been frank enough in reading me all the correspondence that had passed between him and the Speaker, and the plain understanding was that my joining the Bells on their homeward journey, and my acceptance of their hospitality at the end of it, were only intended to afford me an oppor-

tunity of becoming acquainted with the West; for the chance of the attractions of that favoured region proving so strong as to determine me to settle there, and to give up for it such a position as I had made for myself in New England, was an *arrière pensée* of Mr. Bell; a mere conjectural matter to be left to future deliberation and arrangement.

Whether it was mere chance or design, Mrs. Bell seemed bent on prejudging the question; but she went the wrong way about it—it was a clear case of the landlord reckoning without his guest. Of course I did not deem it expedient to discuss the point with the lady, or to appeal to the gentleman and press for an explanation. But as Mrs. Bell again and again returned to the charge, I had no other resource than to shun all *tête-d-tête* conversation with her—as her husband's presence seemed to exercise some restraint upon her tongue—and put off any serious encounter which might be absolutely unavoidable, till it could be brought to a decisive issue. All this, however, did not tend to enliven the weariness of the road, which began to seem to me very long, and I was certainly not in the best of humours by the time we arrived at Knoxville.

At Knoxville we were for three days the guests

of the Honourable James White, one of the Senators of Tennessee, who had set out from Washington one week before our departure, and had thus been able to reach home a few days before we came up. Mr. White was a very venerable-looking old gentleman, eighty years old as far as I could judge, tall and thin, with a sleek silvery mane down to his shoulders, a long face with hollow cheeks, a broad straight nose and a square chin, and altogether that indefinable cast of countenance which we deem characteristic of the North American Indians, and which European colonists settled in the States for several generations seem to catch as peculiar to the air and climate, even when there is no probability of the least admixture of Red blood.

Mr. White was a native of Virginia, issued from one of the "first families" of that State—a family claiming descent from some of the Whites of Shropshire in England. He had in early youth borne arms during the War of Independence, and later in life he had followed what is called in America a diplomatical career, being for his four years United States Minister at Naples; and he spoke of that mission as the happiest time in his life.

On hearing of what country I was, he showed

great kindness to me, expressing the pleasure he felt in welcoming under his roof a native of that dear Italy of whom he had brought back such pleasant recollections; and as it was now understood that he was to proceed with us to Nashville, where he was wanted on some business of State legislation, and as he travelled alone in his carriage, he expressed a wish that I should take the vacant seat by his side for the remainder of the journey, a wish with which I was only too glad to comply, and to which Mr. and Mrs. Bell, who paid to the Senator the greatest attention, did not offer the slightest objection.

A week after leaving Knoxville we at last reached our destination at Nashville, where Mr. White in his turn accepted the Bells' hospitality.

Nashville was then one of the hundred or more towns which sprang up like weeds on the virgin soil of the West, all of them looking very much alike in the bud, yet some of them stunted and even withered in the growth; others thriving and seeming likely to rise to high destinies. The choice of their founders was generally actuated by the very causes which had recommended the spots to the settlers who first claimed them as their lots, and often gave them their names—a pleasant site, a deep soil, a spring of sweet water,

or any peculiar advantage of shelter or drainage, or of land and water communication.

Nashville had been made the capital of Tennessee, a State which boasted just forty years of existence, and the town had certainly made the most of its time. It had its State House and Court House, its hospital and university, its banks and other public buildings, perhaps a score of them, many of them stone buildings, all in the usual dog-Grecian style; long straight streets dotted here and there with log or frame houses, not a few of the latter in progress of construction, with all the lumber and dust and noise of a brand-new stirring place. It stood on a gentle eminence in the midst of a wide-open country, on the left bank of the Cumberland River, a stream rising in the Alleghanies and ending in the Mississippi, navigable throughout below the town, and for a considerable number of miles above it.

Mr. Bell, however, had so eloquently descanted on the merits of the place, on the marvellous agricultural and mineral wealth of its territory, on the undoubted claims it would have from its central position to become the seat of the United States Government, the moment the mistake of the choice of Washington for a capital appeared sufficiently manifest—he had, in

fact, dinned the praises of Nashville so incessantly into my ears ; he had raised my expectations about it to so high a pitch, that no wonder something very like disappointment was the inevitable consequence. Nashville struck me as all very well in its way, but it had at the time only 5000 inhabitants, a number which was not more than doubled ten years later, and had risen no higher than 25,800 at the last census of 1870, a very insignificant progress for an American town, while its position as a centre was, even then, already very inferior to that of Louisville, of Cincinnati, of St. Louis, and especially of that portentous Chicago, whose name only eight years after its foundation had already spread all over the Union.

Mr. Bell's house in Nashville was a moderate-sized, unpretending house in a large street adjoining the State House, a town house with little or no grounds to it, his farms and plantations being several miles out of town in the care of trustworthy slave-drivers.

We were received at the door by the two sons of the family, Herbert and Rupert, two strapping lads, raw and uncouth, but with good honest countenances, and by their temporary tutor, Dr. Winter, behind whom was a bevy of domestic slaves of both sexes, of every shade of colour from ebony to *café au*

lait, some of the women and children very pretty and well-shaped, all of whom set up a chorus of noisy welcome and crowded round us, kissing the hands of massa and missus, some of them in their fervour even slobbering my own.

As soon as we were seated in the parlour a goodly company of friends and neighbours came in, among whom were several members of the Rupert family, brothers or cousins of Mrs. Bell, who had at first resented the *mésalliance* of one of their house with a lackland stranger, a mere Yankee attorney, and who were hardly quite reconciled to the union now that the clever lawyer had accumulated a considerable fortune, and risen to the rank of a great power in the State. I was not slow to perceive that the rich dowry the mature Miss Rupert had brought to her young husband, and the countenance and support of all these stalwart kinsmen more than counterbalanced the strength of will of the head of the family, so that in Mr. Bell's establishment "the gray mare was the better horse." The reader is aware that I had from the beginning some shrewd surmise of the fact at Washington and all along our journey, but any doubt that could still linger in my mind on the subject was promptly dispelled by what was to occur at Nashville.

On the very day after our arrival the serious matter of the education of the two young Bells came in for deliberation, and it was discussed in the presence of those members of the Rupert clan, who assumed the right of constituting themselves into a kind of *conseil de famille*. It was found on strict inquiry that what Dr. Winter had written with respect to the insubordination and violence of Herbert and Rupert, fell considerably short of the truth; that no private tutor, were he even Chiron the Centaur, could hope to curb their upright but unruly disposition; that nothing but the wholesome discipline of a public school, and one as far as possible from their Tennessee home, would do for them, for it was above all things necessary to remove them from the temptation of the pretty quadroon girls in their mother's household, with whom the young Bells, mere hobbledehoys as they still were, in imitation of what was customary with many other youths of planters' families in the South, and even, alas! with some of their elders, were apt to become too dangerously familiar.

This last hint, as Senator White, who had been in attendance at the family council, told me, settled the question at once, the maternal fondness of Mrs. Bell being overruled by her awakened fears for her children's

morals. As to Mr. Bell, he was so utterly defeated in his objections to a college life for his boys, that he even waived his prejudices against the Old Country, and gave in to Mr. White's proposal that his sons should be sent to school to England, where he, Mr. White, would strongly recommend them to his good friend, the head master of Winchester School, a distinguished divine and a genial man, with whom he had once travelled a great part of the way through France and Italy.

The settlement of this weighty question smoothed down all the difficulties of my position as Mr. Bell's guest. The fancy the two somewhat rough but affectionate boys most unaccountably took to me (when they had laid aside their fear) won me the good-will of the sweet-tempered as well as sweet-voiced lady of the house, and of the majority of her bluff country cousins; and the much that the octogenarian Senator made of me, removed any doubt as to my title to be looked upon as a gentleman, my quality as a foreigner, and apparently as a dependent on Mr. Bell's bounty, notwithstanding.

As to Mr. Bell, now that my stay in Nashville no longer answered his primary object, he seemed very much at a loss how to dispose of me, and was probably as anxious to be rid of me, as I for my own part could

be to be gone. He nevertheless took me all over his Tennessee University and Franklin College ; but, whatever ideas he might have conceived of the future of those two academical establishments, it was evident that very little had hitherto been thought of about them besides their staring, almost empty buildings, which were for the present mere schools without masters or pupils. It now came out that Dr. Winter had been originally brought over from Yale College in New Haven, where he was proctor, to take the presidency of either of the two institutions ; but neither he nor any other M.A. or B.A. of any Eastern college, to whom the same honour had been tendered—among others poor David Marx, my old friend of the Cambridge Young Ladies' Academy—had felt inclined to forego even the meagre bone of their tutorship in the East for the mere shadow of a head-mastership in the West, for too many high-schools, lyceums, seminaries, etc., were planned in these embryo Western States ; the demand for head-masters, professors, etc., was much too great for even that fertile nursery of parsons and schoolmasters, New England, to be able to supply it. For what concerned myself Mr. Bell seemed to care as little for the study of modern languages as for that of the classics ; and, all things considered, he did not

very well see what other available work I could be put to.

The mistake he had committed in sending for me was thus tacitly admitted. Yet he begged me to stay on at least till the end of that month (September), when, "if I was irrevocably bent on going," he said, though I had not said a word about it—I might still greatly oblige him by travelling with his two sons as far as New York, and hence seeing them safely embarked for England.

The weight of a painful uncertainty being thus happily shaken off my shoulders, there only remained for me to make the best of the four weeks that must elapse ere I was completely emancipated from what had certainly become a false position.

Herbert and Rupert Bell, now my indivisible companions, took me out on short country excursions to their farms, and to those of some of the Ruperts, their relatives on their mother's side, and I was thus enabled to see how slave labour would work in these new Western districts into which the surplus black population was being rapidly shifted from the comparatively exhausted soil of the Maritime States. The climate of this inland region was less favourable to the cultivation of cotton and cane sugar; but, on the other hand, it could yield

any amount of tobacco, maize, rice, etc., and rear the cattle required for the consumption of the South. Tennessee and Kentucky were, therefore, as fully intended for white husbandry as any other State in the Ohio valley; but white labourers were not easily induced to settle where they had to bear the competition of the slaves, and these midland districts were thus in a state of transition equally ill-adapted to either the slave or the free-labour system.

In so far as I could see of the condition of the plantations I visited, I felt then, as I did subsequently in the West Indies, in Brazil, and elsewhere, that the treatment of the blacks was as good as their owners, in consideration of their own interest, could make it, for the slaves had in their master's estimation the value of cattle, and were tended with as much care and tenderness as would be bestowed on useful dumb creatures. It was not the lash, but the dread of the lash, that kept them to their work. Where discipline was firmly established the necessity for enforcing it was unfrequent, and in the same measure as mental development was discountenanced, bodily indulgence was allowed and even encouraged. The negro slave was certainly better fed, better lodged, merrier and happier, than the Irish or Lombard free labourer is at the

present time. It was not as injurious to the physical condition of the blacks, who, as it turned out, would not have been better off if left to themselves—that slavery might be considered an unmitigated evil. It was rather in its effects on the character of the whites that it was really and fatally objectionable, for it created among them a distaste for labour—for that hard labour which is collectively incumbent as an inexorable duty on the whole of mankind—it created among them a spirit of caste, a conceit of race, a superiority of colour, which, however, based on undeniable natural difference, could never be reduced to organised artificial distinction; and it fostered among them feelings and habits—it reared among them a standard of morality—especially with respect to intercourse between the sexes, which, however justified by the traditions of remote patriarchal life, was incompatible with the holiness of our modern domestic institutions, and with the inexorable requirements of our social order.

That the white population of the Slave States had been deeply and perhaps indelibly defiled by too close and incessant an intimacy with the negro thralls which it doomed to perpetual helotism, was a fact to which the peculiarity of accent and—what is more—of manners,

even among the educated classes, bore undeniable witness. What was Yankee twang in the North was negro brogue in the South. Like the Mussulman despot of Asia or Africa the American slave-owner had certainly the habit of command, the high tone and spirit, and, to some extent, the generous instincts which an acknowledged supremacy inspires ; but contact with degraded beings has necessarily a degrading tendency. The taste for low pleasures and still lower conversation, the habits of chewing and spitting and other ill-bred tricks caught in the nursery, and confirmed by early association with abject beings, amongst whom all intellectual, moral, and even pure and sound religious education was deemed dangerous, tainted the very air in which a Southern planter's family was reared, and went far to prove how difficult it was for a slave-owner to touch the pitch of his blacks without exhibiting the marks at least of outward blackguardism.

I have never forgotten the impression I received, even after almost two years' experience of life in the United States, from the behaviour of the Honourable Titus G. Luxmore, a general, and Mr. White's colleague in the Senate at Washington, who came to call upon Mrs. Bell at the time of my stay at Nashville. I happened to be alone with the lady in the drawing-

room when his visit was announced and was rising to withdraw, when I was desired to stay and make the general's acquaintance.

General Luxmore was a handsome man, barely forty years old, with a florid complexion, a round, stout, beardless face, the very picture of a strong constitution and good humour. He had on a blue long-tailed dress-coat with brass buttons, a black stock, white waistcoat and trousers, patent-leather boots, and all the fittings of a *buck* of the early part of our century. He came in with 'an easy' gait and not ungraceful swagger, did all that was polite to the lady and courteous to her guest, then drew a heavy fauteuil up to Mrs. Bell's rocking-chair, sat down, threw himself back on his chair, nursed his left leg on his right knee, and the talk began. Presently, however, our visitor began to fidget, wriggled to right and left, looked all round, stood up, sat down again, and though the talk went on, there could be no doubt that something was interfering with the gentleman's ease and comfort. He could not stand it at last; he rose with a resolute look, strode across the room, disappeared in the passage, and came back, kicking before him some rattling china utensil which he had no doubt noticed on his first entrance, and in which he recognised a friend indeed.

It was what they called a “spittoon,” a common enough article of furniture in every American house, but even at Nashville not deemed quite ornamental in a lady’s boudoir. But the general belonged to Memphis, a city in the extreme south-western corner of Tennessee, on the Mississippi, bordering on Arkansas ; he had been in the army or the navy, and was in politics a “know-nothing,” an ultra-liberal party that must have had something in common with the Russian Nihilist of the present day. His *quid* was to this honourable Senator as necessary as the air he breathed. He now resumed his seat, took out a little pocket-knife and a black cake, which looked like *liquorice* but was tobacco, whittled off a few slices, rolled them up, took the lump between his teeth, and went to work in such earnest that, whatever improving effects his five minutes’ conversation may have left in Mrs. Bell’s mind, her carpet would not, in spite of the spittoon, for many years recover the disastrous results of his filthy indulgence.

I do not think that revolting sight was needed to thoroughly disgust me with the West. But it was the last drop in a brimful cup, a cup that was fortunately soon to pass from me. The first of October came, and found us—the two young brothers Bell and myself—ready for a start. We had had places secured for us on the

top of the stage-coach from Nashville to Louisville. From Louisville we ascended the Ohio by steamboat to Cincinnati. From Cincinnati we travelled by another stage-coach to some station on a newly-opened railway, where a train took us *via* Wheeling, Pittsburg, or some other place now no longer remembered, to Philadelphia and New York.

It was a fortnight's journey; hard work here and there, not altogether free from risk, but not unamusing or unexciting, I might almost say not uneventful. It would certainly be difficult for a traveller of the present day to realise the state of things we left behind us as we went through the various stages of that Western trip of five-and-forty years ago. In the first place the coach from Nashville to Louisville took us over some parts of a road so rough and hard, over such cruel half-hewn rocks and marshy grounds, half-bridged over with wooden rails, stretched across the way on the plan of what they called a *Corduroy Road*, that even with four gallant horses, a genius of a driver, and the most propitious dry autumn weather, we could only get on at the rate of two miles an hour, and with such amount of jolting and bumping that it seemed a prodigy if the horses came off from the scramble with unbroken legs, the coach with sound springs, and ourselves with any

breath left in our bodies. Between Cincinnati and the railway junction again, where the country was mostly flat and the road comparatively smooth, the coachmen were smitten with the racing mania—a malady common to all men in charge of any public conveyance by land or sea in America, and to a certain extent also in England—which not unfrequently proves contagious to the travellers themselves, and which made our driver loiter on the road till a rival Jehu from some other company came up, when there arose a howl of defiance and away we went, neck or nothing, in a devil-take-the-hindmost frenzy, with such rolling and swaying of our lumbering top-heavy conveyance as proved not a little trying to the nerves, especially when four or more coaches joined in the fray, each trying not only to out-speed but also to cut each other off, venturing across deep ruts, plunging into dark mud-holes, and shaving close to steep banks and awkward turnings, with a rashness which, without that Providence that watches over mad and drunken men, must inevitably have led to a smash. In some of the branches of railway lines then in progress we came in for experimental runs, trying how the line would stand a sixty miles an hour speed on newly-laid rails, past unfinished and encumbered

stations, and with no telegraph to warn us of unforeseen encounters.

We outlived all that, however, and the journey, as I said, was not without some pleasurable emotions. Louisville and Cincinnati, the only two places where we allowed ourselves a day's rest, interested us; the last-named especially charmed me by the amenity of its position, its verdant hills, its noble river, with the huge, white palatial steamers moored to its banks—Cincinnati, the queenly Western city with the stolidly pedantic name, upon which the recent appellation of Porcopolis, etymologically hybrid as it is, and reeking with the blood of its hecatomb of pigs, might, nevertheless, be accepted as a decided improvement.

At Louisville we had an awful tragedy performed almost before our very eyes. As we were returning to our hotel after a stroll about town, we found the steps and the hall encumbered with an eager crowd in a state of frantic excitement, all shouting with one voice: "Lynch him!" "Lynch him!"

A man, we soon learnt, had been murdered within the hotel-bar. A judge from Alabama had been called upon by a citizen of the town, a tailor by trade, who had a long and old bill against him. The reason

why I cannot tell, but it is a fact that your tailor's bill is that which, either in the new or in the old world, the heart of man feels the greatest repugnance to settle. The tailor was pressing; the tailor was insolent; the judge waxed wroth. Then he seemed to cool all at once, and broke off, begging his creditor to "wait only five minutes, and he would be back with the money." Back he came, indeed, with his hand in his side pocket, whence, as he stepped up to the tailor, he drew out, not a purse, but a bowie knife, which he plunged into the man's heart, thus summarily ridding himself of a dun.

This new way of paying old debts did not meet with the approval of the bystanders. "What! An Alabama man to slay a Kentuck in the midst of us! Such a good fellow, too, the most indulgent of creditors; a very phoenix of tailors! Are we the men to look on and see it done? Down with the assassin! Take the knife from him! Lynch him! Lynch him! Lynch him!" was the cry. The judge ran upstairs to his room, bolted and barricaded his door, at which soon the mob thundered. There was time, however, for better men to interfere. These stood up for law and order.

"Shame, fellow townsmen! The murderer shall have a short trial and a long rope; but all in due

time and proper form. Lynchings days should be over for ever in Kentucky."

The milder counsels prevailed. The murderer came down under an escort of tall strong men who screened him from view, and kept back the rabble; they walked off with him; they smuggled him off to prison, baffling the wild beast, the mob, of its prey.

This is all we saw; the rest we learnt from the papers a twelvemonth later. By that time the culprit had made friends of his rescuers. They learnt to pity, to esteem, and like him. He was a rich man; he could pay for the best gaol accommodation and counsel. He had a crowd of visitors to see that he should be well tended and treated. With these came also ladies and young ladies, all interest and sympathy. One of them admired, loved, married the man—married him there, in his cell, under trial for his life. But that life was now safe. A revulsion of feeling rapidly set in in his favour. "By right of his wife he was now a Kentuck. That poor devil of a tailor—a hard case, indeed—but he was certainly abusive, aggravating. Flesh and blood could not stand all that, you know. A hard case, no doubt; but he would have it so. Serve him right."

And so the murderer was acquitted, and went back to the hotel with his wife, rejoicing, the mob cheering.

CHAPTER XIII.

FAREWELL TO AMERICA.

Back to New England—Change in the situation—My unfitness for it—Longing for a change—Old friends and new—Anglo-Saxon friendships—Two countrymen—Spurs to a willing horse—Italian and American women—My first and last visitor—The cat out of the bag—A declaration—A fiasco—Boston to New York—New York to Covent Garden.

WE timed the movements of our fortnight's journey from Nashville so as to make sure to reach our destination before the middle of the month. And it was precisely on the 14th of October, 1838, that we arrived at New York; quite in time for me to take my young friends on board the good ship *Comet*, which we knew was to sail for Liverpool on the following day.

By the time we parted, Herbert and Rupert Bell had become my fast friends, and I have still their letters bearing witness to the “great good” they said “that my influence for those few weeks, both at Nashville and

on the journey, had done them." I saw them only once again, three years later, in London, where they called upon me on their way from Winchester to Oxford. I have no doubt they turned out useful and ornamental members of their Western community, and contributed in no small degree to the refinement which the lapse of nearly half a century must have wrought in the community itself. For my own part, on the 17th, I again saw myself in Boston, where, as on former occasions, I put up at the Tremont House.

My first sensations, on being thus quit of the worst consequences of my rash Western expedition, were of intense relief—such relief as that of a mariner cast ashore after a shipwreck. I had had a narrow escape, and was thankful for bare life; but my troubles were not at an end, if indeed they could not be said to be just beginning. Boston was not my home, and, as I had learnt from experience, neither that nor any other place in the New World could be a home for me. New England was no more to me than a desert island, where a poor stranded sailor might toil and hope, waiting till the chance of some passing vessel, seeing and heeding his distress signal, or his own skill in constructing a boat or a raft, might enable him to take to sea again, and be wafted to his own true haven.

I was not fit for American life. The education which had made me an Italian patriot and driven me out as a political exile, had done nothing to prepare me for the lot of an ordinary emigrant. The man who aspires to make his way in a new country should be hampered with no recollections or aspirations—no repining for or hankering after the things he may have left behind in the old one. He must start with a stout determination to be a settler among settlers; he must be ready to do in America as the Americans do. The real business for a real man in a colony is to make money, and that can best be done by agricultural, manufacturing, mining, or trading industry, followed up into the highest branches of land speculation, banking and financing. For no pursuits of that nature had I either aptitude or inclination; the genius of a John Jacob Astor or of a Stephen Girard was not in me. Literature in the United States had not as yet been raised or degraded into a trade. Large as the demand for parsons and schoolmasters was in New England, their scarcity chiefly arose from the fact that even in that comparatively poor country, a man who had the wish and power to "get on," well knew that the last thing he should take to for his purpose was preaching or teaching. A clergyman's or an instructor's profes-

sion was ill paid, not sufficiently honoured, and it led nowhere. The law was more profitable, and it was considered the high road to political preferment. But even politics in these democratic communities did not hold out very tempting prizes to men of intellect and character, if placed above want either by their independent means or by their talents and energies. For the Government of the great Republic was then, and is now, more than ever, a scramble for places, in which the needy adventurer, the noisy stump orator, the jobber and robber of this or that "ring," has a better chance than the really able and honest statesman who fears God and respects himself.

As to literary men—*i.e.* men living by literature—there were none in my days in America ; for Prescott, Ticknor, Bancroft, Sprague, and other historians, biographers, critics, etc., were gentlemen cultivating letters as amateurs, loving their work for its own sake, but relying either on a good patrimony or on some other lucrative employment for their subsistence, and actually spending more in ink and paper than their productions could for a long time be hoped to repay. And Cooper, Irving, Willis, Longfellow, and other writers of poetry, novels, or mere trifles, although they were popular and might command a sale, could hardly withstand the

competition of the pirated editions of English publications in the same style, whose name was legion, so that there was no other literary career at all profitable than that of the mere hack of a magazine editor, or the plodding man-of-all-work supplying tracts and pamphlets for some society busy with the propagation of useful knowledge. I had already felt, in all the heyday of my full success in the spring of that year, that, even had I had freedom and leisure to devote all my faculties to literary pursuits, I had not in me the stuff out of which an author of the very first order could be made ; and it was natural to argue that if I was to resign myself to a secondary rank, or to something even considerably below that, such a condition would, in all probability, turn out more endurable in England, where the vastness and variety of literary production was such as to allow a man a chance of finding his own fitting place, and once he had found it of keeping it ; and where the wise provisions of the Copyright Acts enabled every one to look upon his brain-work as inalienable property. Literature, it should be remembered, had, at the beginning, no particular attraction for me. It had not been my choice ; it had, as it were, been forced upon me by circumstances ; but it seemed to me I could more willingly follow it if it could be made my sole

and exclusive pursuit, if I could make it support me without the necessity of eking out my income by the drudgery of private teaching, or what I used to call the theatrical exhibition of public lecturing.

This concentration of my efforts on one kind of employment had proved upon experiment to be impossible for me in Boston, or anywhere in America. It might be found practicable in England, and why should not I give that country a trial? This way of reasoning seemed to me so convincing that, had it been at all possible, I should not have hesitated about acting at once upon it. I should, on my return from the West, have taken my berth on board the *Comet*, and travelled with the young brothers Bell from New York to Liverpool. But, alas! there were insurmountable material obstacles to that course. I had hardly as much money at my disposal as would pay for the passage, and I knew that, however kindly fortune might favour me in the end, something like a very severe struggle awaited me in England at the beginning, and I felt that to engage in it in utter destitution of what is called the sinews of war, would be the height of madness. The experience of the distress and humiliation to which my penniless condition had exposed me on landing in a foreign country, the cruel remembrance of my interview with the Catholic Bishop

at the Boston Oratory—all that long hour of anguish and shame, was too fresh in my mind for me to expose myself to a repetition of the same sorrowful scenes in another place.

A prolongation of my stay where I was, was, therefore, a matter of necessity. Here I was, again back in Boston, bent on the resumption of my former occupations, ready to give lessons, to deliver lectures, to write review or magazine articles, to take to anything that would enable me to make money, to save money; to find in America the means by which I might manage to leave America.

As I well knew that it was now rather in the city than in its suburbs that I should look for the greatest number of my wealthy and influential acquaintance, and for the most remunerative part of my business, I deemed it inexpedient to go back to my lodgings in Cambridge or Charlestown, and I settled for the winter in Boston, taking up a permanent apartment in "The Tremont," a hotel in America affording in those days the most comfortable, and, what was of importance to me, the freest and at the same time by no means the most expensive accommodation. It was not without a pang of self-reproach that I could make up my mind to give up my true old friends for my more useful

new patrons. But I had a stern, inexorable purpose to serve, and I could suffer no compunctions about my selfishness and ingratitude to stand in my way. That purpose was to win my liberty of action.

On the other hand, both my friends and patrons equally seemed to find my change of quarters perfectly natural, and to concern themselves very little about it. That absence of barely three months seemed to have somewhat altered these good people's disposition towards me. They had heard that I had left them with some chance of "bettering myself" in the West; they had wished me God-speed in their hearts, and did not even take it amiss that in my hurry to seize fortune by the forelock I had allowed myself no time for leave-taking. There was at least as much surprise as rejoicing at my unexpected reappearance; something like regret in the surmise that my Western enterprise should have turned out a failure. "Ecce iterum Crispinus! Here is Mariotti again come back to us like a bad shilling!" They did not say the words, but I fancied I could read them in the expression of their faces.

I did not find any of them less kind or less willing to do me a good turn. The same houses were hospitably opened to me; the same desire for my company at all their reunions and festivities was everywhere expressed;

but, somehow, the position was no longer the same. There was no longer the eagerness, I might say the enthusiasm, which had a twelvemonth before promoted my interests, guessed my wishes, and forestalled my requests. The novelty about me had worn off. They knew everything about me; I had had my turn; I could not be the lion of a second season.

But such was my own, and I believe many other people's experience of the Anglo-Saxon nature on either side of the Atlantic. An American or an Englishman's friendship is not easily got, but when won, it may be relied upon for ever. In his heart of hearts he will always be the same to you, so long at least as you give him no just cause for estrangement. But his mere outward manner is apt to change. In the benevolence which he shows to a stranger on a first acquaintance there is a good fund of ready genuine sympathy; an earnest sense of the duty of charity of man to man. But there is also a certain amount of ingenuous curiosity, a craving for knowledge, for the exercise of his powers of observation and comparison; above all things that longing for constant employment and exertion, which is at the bottom of Anglo-Saxon energy. If you wish to secure an Englishman or an American's good-will, show him something that he

can do for you. So long as he thinks that you need his assistance, not only will he put himself out of his way to serve you, but he will be thankful to you, and like and love you for the chance you give him to make himself useful. If he saves you from drowning, or rescues you from the flames, his affection for one who afforded him an opportunity to show his courage and humanity will know no bounds. But this helpfulness on his part should not be needed twice. He has shown you the way; he hopes you will be able to find it when you have to travel over it again. He has set you on your legs; he expects you will have learnt to walk alone. If you apply to him twice, he will not deny you; but by overtasking his sympathy you will forfeit his esteem. He will not think the better of you for your relapse into a helplessness above which he had reason to trust he had for ever raised you.

As the individual, so is also the community. When it was first known that a stranger, an Italian, for whose character Governor Everett, the President of Harvard College, and other notable gentlemen made themselves vouchers, had come to settle in their quiet New England centre, a wish to see him, to hear what he was like was easily awakened; and no sooner was it ascertained that

he was looking for employment, than there were good-natured persons by hundreds, chiefly of the gentler sex, who looked upon him as a godsend ; who, not having much to do for themselves, needed the excitement of exerting themselves for somebody else ; and these took it upon themselves to see that the new comer should lack nothing of what he required. Those who have followed this narrative so far, well know what friends in need were Charles Milner, Miss Dwight, Mrs. Percy and her sister Harriett, Dr. Ware, Mrs. Kingsley Longfellow, the Miss Appletons, Dr. Howe, and ever so many more ; how they all took me by the hand, and in every way assisted and promoted me, both socially and professionally. And with the success of their endeavours, their efforts were redoubled. If it came out after all that there was something in their *protégé*, their eagerness to claim the merit of having discovered that something, of having brought it into light, kept pace with their desire to make it more extensively known, more generally acknowledged. Such as I was, they had made me. They took in me that pride, they attached to me that interest, which men feel in their own handiwork ; and which, like all the best of our human instincts, if probed to their depth, will be found to have their roots in self-love.

These feelings could not be expected to be again at work on my return. Out of sight is terribly out of mind in American, or even English society. Three months had not indeed been sufficient to cause me to be utterly forgotten. But I could not again come in as a stranger. My friends had even dropped the *Signor*, and addressed me as *Mr.* or *Esq.* They looked upon me as one of themselves, and, as such, they justly expected that I should be as little to their charge as they were to one another's. I was out of leading strings, and should now be able to shift for myself.

And, no doubt, I was only too glad to be thrown on my own resources. What concerned me was only to see that the less they had to do for me, the less they considered themselves bound to think of me.

This cooling of their manner—if, indeed, it was not altogether a fancy of mine—would have been no sure index to their feelings, and it certainly implied no diminution of their kindness; but it pained and provoked me. It had the effect of humbling me in my own estimation, and sobering whatever might be oversanguine in my expectations. At the same time, however, it acted like a blast of fresh breeze in rousing my energies. In the same measure as it persuaded me

that the Yankees were too fickle a people for me to think of seeking a permanent home among them, it strengthened my determination to leave them, and to look for my fortune elsewhere. All I had to do was to work for it. I had the winter and spring—say eight or nine months—to provide for the expenses of the voyage. The soil, which had been so bountiful in supplying me with a sustenance during two seasons, I declared, must now be made to yield a competence for the third—and something over it in the bargain.

My mind being made up, the task proved far easier and less unpleasant than I had anticipated. As a teacher of Italian, I had more work and better wages than in the two previous years. My former pupils came back to me, more advanced and more interested in their lessons. I tried also lectures on Dante; but only four—one, introductory, on the life of the poet and his times; of the others, one for each of the three divisions of the “Sacred Poem;” but as these latter were illustrated by reading of extracts in the original, the audience was limited to a few of the ripest Italian scholars, and the audience was, therefore, as the newspapers said, “select and appreciative.”

The object of these lectures was to vindicate Dante’s character from the charges so often brought against

him, painting him in the darkest colours, as a savage partisan, a “fierce Ghibeline,” an implacable hater of persons; for I was, and am, convinced that there never was a more tender and loving disposition than Dante’s, and that his terrible wrath was only roused within him in presence of the most flagrant instances of human depravity. Nothing, in my opinion, could be easier than to prove that it was the sin, and not the sinner, that called forth the outbursts of his withering indignation; and that his award of praise or blame, of reward or punishment, was prompted not by blind partiality or prejudice, but by a stern and inexorable sense of truth and justice.

Whatever time I could spare from these occupations as a private or public instructor, was invariably given to penwork. Several of my review articles in the monthlies and quarterlies appeared during these few months. Some of them were still standing over in the editor’s hands when I embarked for England, and for these I received payment in advance.

By these strenuous and unremitting exertions my object was attained. Before the early spring set in, I had already safely locked up in my writing-desk the hundred dollars in gold which were to waft me back across the Atlantic; and these had been won, not only

by hard work, but also by rigid self-denial. This abnegation was not limited to a niggardly restraint upon material comforts and luxuries, but it extended also to a renunciation of such pleasures as I might have found in social intercourse. I never was on the same intimate terms with my Boston acquaintance as I had been in the previous winters with my Charlestown and Cambridge friends. That unceremonious practice of dropping in unbidden, *in prima sera*, on the Percys, on the Kingsleys, and other families in the suburbs, where it was put up with as an outlandish but not unpleasant Italian custom, would probably have been found unwarrantable by the larger and more formal coteries of the city. At all events I never tried it there. Cards for large parties, balls, concerts, etc., were sent to me by the bushel; but it was very seldom that I availed myself of even the most welcome invitation; and not merely because I grudged the waste of time, or the trifling expense an acceptance would have involved, but also because I was not then, and have not been at any time in my life, a very sociable, at least a very gregarious animal. In a little knot of four or five persons, at a dinner party of not more than six or eight, I might be perfectly in my own clement; I might warm up with sympathy, become expansive

and talkative enough. But the effect of a large rout, the din of voices, the babel of tongues, the heat of the room, was always to shut me up, to daze and bewilder me. I was too shy and awkward for a dancer; too deficient in the resources of small talk; very near-sighted; absent, apt to cut my most familiar and dearest acquaintance. Men thought me reserved and distant, when I was only embarrassed; and the absurdly early hours, in which I was accustoming myself to work in the morning, necessarily made me dull and positively stupid when the evening entertainment required every man to be particularly bright and wide-awake.

But although I was thus successful in cutting myself out of American society, I did not find it equally easy to ward off the company of my own countrymen. It chanced that two or three years before my arrival in New York, the lessee and manager of the Opera House in that city had come to grief; and all the troupe dependent upon him for their salaries had been thrown upon their own resources. Several of these waifs and strays of Italian musical and pantomimic art I met at Da Ponte's house during my short stay in New York, in the spring of 1838, and some of them hearing all I had to say in favour of New England and of its highly civilised city,

were tempted to come and try their fortune there, and these popped upon me when I least expected them at the "Tremont Hotel."

One of them was Giovanni Paggi, a first-rate player on the hautboy, and what he called *Corno Inglese*, or English horn, who had been heard with applause in all the cities of Europe, and had besides a very extensive knowledge of music in all its branches. He was an undersized man, with a large burly torso and short limbs, a very big head, with a whole mat of thick black hair, a box-wood complexion with deep marks of the small pox ; but with a pleasant good-humoured expression about his eyes and mouth. He was a native of Fermo, in the Marches, the son of a poor barber who had given him no other education than an early acquaintance with the musical instrument on which he was himself no mean amateur performer. But Giovanni Paggi was by nature a genius, and he had social as well as professional gifts which, with a little schooling, might have fitted him for any kind of high intellectual pursuit.

My other friend was a Neapolitan, though a native of Zante, or Corfu, by name Spiridione Gambardella, who had come out with the Operatic body, as a first-rate tenor ; but either because he had lost his voice,

or was tired of a singer's calling, he took to portrait painting ; and, though he had never had any regular drawing lessons at home, he had here made himself a master in oil-colours ; had achieved great success and established very profitable connections among the wealthiest New York families. Gambardella was in the prime of youth, had the advantage of a tall and elegant figure, fine Grecian features, and wonderful animal spirits ; withal a great versatility of talent which enabled him to take up anything he had a fancy to, and become familiar with subjects from which his utter want of elementary studies might be expected to have utterly debarred him. It is thus that he dabbled not without success in astronomy, and only three years later, I found him in London, where he had set up an observatory, and put himself into communication with Lord Rosse, from whom he received some hints about the construction of a great telescope intended to rival his lordship's own world-famous instrument.

These two worthies sought me out in Boston, and having somewhat exhausted the New York markets in the disposal of their respective wares, expected me to furnish them with such introductions as might enable them to find customers among my own connections. I was, of course, only too happy to do my best for them,

and had the satisfaction to see that their own abilities soon carried them much farther than they could have gone by any help of mine. But the mischief was that, in return for the good-will I had shown in befriending them, they looked upon themselves as in duty bound to patronise me. This they did, not only by heralding forth my “great literary talents,” but by denouncing the “stolid want of appreciation” which suffered “such rare gifts to languish in obscurity,” and expressing a hope that I might soon find, if not in Boston, then in New York, if not in New York then in England, a proper field for the exercise of my “transcendent abilities.”

The egregious absurdity of these characteristically Italian hyperbolical expressions at first amused, but soon shocked and alarmed me, and I lost no time in reminding these clumsy flatterers that they were now in a country where their words of praise or blame would be taken to the letter; upbraiding them for their presumption in talking about subjects they could not understand; and I asked them whether it was from some hidden design to do me harm that they spoke of me in a strain, which, if it did no worse, turned me at least into an object of killing ridicule. But it was all in vain. Remonstrances, entreaties, and even threats,

could not prevail on them to hold their silly tongues. Heartily, however, as I despised and loathed their praises, I must avow that, in my frame of mind at the time, their suggestions that I might "better myself" by leaving America for England, were not dropped into unwilling ears. Even a fool's advice is not unwelcome when it merely urges us down a slope on which we are already rapidly sliding.

That funny rascal Paggi, at whose request I had written two or three songs for him to set to music, thought he could best show his gratitude by gross adulation, so gross that it would have sickened me, had it not been for the monkey tricks which deprived his words of all serious meaning and importanee.

"My own dear, dear Mariotti," he would say, in his own coaxing, wheedling tone, turning up the whites of his eyes in the earnestness of his peroration, "it really breaks my heart to see you here. You are the pearl of price, and why should you throw yourself away among these Yankee swine? You speak and write good English, but it is too good for them. The better you express yourself the less they understand you. Lectures on Dante! What do you think they care about Dante, or, for that matter, about Tasso? What they care about is only dollars and cents. Ears they have, but

Midas' ears ; they cannot and will not hear. Did I not see it, last Monday evening, at Mrs. Lawrence's ? A good soul is Mrs. Lawrence ; she pressed me to play, and would take no denial. I knew what was coming, but to please her, I took out my English horn and gave them a solo—a piece of my own composition—the notes of which, I can tell you, in Italy would have melted hearts of stone. Well, sir, what do you think was my thanks for it ? There was the whole Boston menagerie assembled. Such a hubbub of voices, we might as well have been at the Sinigaglia Fair, with all the market donkeys in full cry. Nobody heeded me, except one elderly gentleman, all in black, with a great starched white choker ; and he looked very grave and silent, very knowing, with big staring eyes like an owl's fixed upon me. And I saw him and said : "There is one who can tell what good music is when he hears it," said I ; and his attention warmed me up, and, you may believe it, I outdid myself. Well, my friend : what of it ? When I had done, and all held their tongues, as usual, up steps my old fogey to me, and pats me on the shoulder and says—what do you think he said ? 'How you *do* blow, to be sure !' said he. And that is all I got for my pains. Music for Yankees ! Yankee-doodle-do ! Dollars and cents ! That's all they value."

"Come, come, Giovannino *mio*," I said, laughing, "abuse the Yankees to your heart's content; but surely you will not quarrel with their dollars and cents."

"What could I do?" he replied with his doleful whine. "That thief of a New York Impresario turned us all adrift like beggars. Something to live must be done, and it was everybody for himself. New York was to me a vast gaol, and the few dollars I might scrape together were the silver key which was to open the door for me to get out. Yet a few weeks of the Boston season, and then, 'Hey, presto! away to England!' That is the country for men who have faith in themselves, and—there is the place for you."

"How do you know what faith I have in myself?" I asked.

"That is the place for you, I say," he repeated.

"How do you know I have dollars and cents to take me there?" I again asked.

"Where there is a will there is a way. England is the country for you," he insisted. "I have been in England. I have given two concerts in the Hanover Square Rooms. There are men in England. Here the women alone are endurable. A paradise for them and a

paradise for us strangers. Pity they are so squeamish and prudish, so absurd about their chemises, and cock-swains, and the legs of their tables. Fancy, I was still a stranger in New York, and was strolling in Broadway arm-in-arm with a lady friend, a widow—a fine woman, but no longer a chicken—when we met another lady who walked wearily, and panted as she stopped to shake hands with my companion. ‘*Tiens!*’ I said, looking after her as she left us, and speaking French, for English was then still Greek to me. ‘*Tiens! Le monde ne va pas bientôt finir ici!*’ Would you believe it? My lady friend stopped short, tore her arm from mine, and looked at me with an angry look of surprise. ‘*Comment?*’ I asked, ‘*est-ce que cette dame n'est pas une femme mariée?*’ Would you believe it? My lady friend turned her back upon me and rushed across the street; and she cut me dead after that whenever and wherever she met me.”

“Right enough,” I said; “there are things in this world one may see, but should not notice, and it is only a boor that will always call a spade a spade.”

“To be sure! *Shocking!*” he cried, in a falsetto, mimicking a female voice. “The pretty hypocrites! The sweet humbugs! How virtuous they are! ‘God

bless our Yankee Girls !' as one of them sang to me the other evening : We are not like—

“The dark Italian loving much,
But more than *one* can tell.”

‘We love but one and it is for life.’ ‘Yes, and if you did love more than one, you would not tell,’ I answered. Bah ! women are the same all the world over, my dear Gigi. These fair Americans look like marble outside, but only lay a finger upon them and you will find them softer than butter within. So at least we found them in New York. Ask Gambardella if we had not our caravans there. Did you not find them the same in Boston ?”

“Nay !” I answered smiling, “I do not go about laying my finger upon them. I am not a man *& bonnes fortunes*, and if I were, I hope I should be too much of a gentleman, too much of a man, to go and brag of it. Depend upon it, Paggi, women in every country are what the men make them ; good or bad according to the name the men give them. Do you think Wendel Holmes would have described Italian women as he did in the ‘Yankee Girls’ song you have just quoted, if there were not men like you in Italy, who take their pleasure in blackening their

countrywomen's reputation? What did Wendel Holmes know of Italian women? Where had he ever seen one? Had he not taken you to your word and quoted you, or men like you, he would have been a fool to write what he wrote. Italian women are not worse than other women. But other people are not anxious, as you are, to cry stinking fish."

The rebuke was not to his taste, and he left me in a pet. But meanwhile what had been said between us about our intentions of leaving America, being spread about by him with his usual want of accuracy and discretion, had prepared my acquaintance for the news which I would only have wished to impart at a later and more opportune moment. It was soon understood that that season would be my last in Boston, and that I contemplated a removal to England. The result was that I had to stand the brunt of harassing inquiries about my movements and prospects, and to combat never-ending remonstrances I met in many quarters concerning the egregious, "almost suicidal," folly of my scheme.

"What is this we hear, Signor Mariotti? You are off? Going to leave us? Why, what shall we do without you? We always looked upon you as one of ourselves. Has anything gone wrong with you? Has

any one given you reason to complain ? And whither go you ? Home to England ? What is there for you there that you could not find as good here ? What friends have you in England ? What opening ? Have you been told what an awful place London is for any stranger to get on ? You will not find as much room there as we had for you here ; nor will there be so many hands, so many hearts to welcome you. It is a shabby return we get for our loving kindness, and may you never have cause to regret and repent it ! ”

Such, in words more or less direct and explicit, were the complaints, the warnings, the reproaches with which I was assailed whenever my project of a change of residence was mentioned in my presence. There was in all this more of kindness than of real displeasure. But weary of unprofitable discussion, and anxious to show that my resolution was not to be shaken, I made up my mind to hasten my departure, and towards the middle of April, 1839, I sent a cheque for a hundred dollars to my friend Foresti, in New York, begging him to secure a berth for me on board the mail-packet, *St. James*, which was to start for Portsmouth on the ensuing May-day. No sooner was this decisive step made known than all condolences or remonstrances on the part of my true and discreet friends at once ceased.

They all wished me the fullest success wherever I might go and whatever I might undertake ; and they vied with one another in their zeal to procure me the best introductions into the London world, some of them even taking me out on a visit to Dr. William Ellery Channing, because they thought that the name of that highly esteemed divine might have great weight with some of the most influential persons of his own, the Unitarian sect.

Everything was thus smoothing down in favour of my rash enterprise, when, on the 15th of April, just as I had done breakfast, the hotel waiter came into my room, and laid on my table a card, on which was written :

“MR. CHARLES B. MILNER,”

announcing in the same words the very visitor he ushered in thirty-one months before, on the second day after my first arrival in Boston.

“What, you ! you, Milner, at last !” I cried, in a real transport of joy, “I thought we never were to see each other again.”

He seemed equally delighted to see me, and it was like a meeting of brothers ; yet we had only had one day together in all our lives. So much for love at first sight.

He had grown in size and strength. He looked sunburnt and weather-beaten, more manly, and beaming with health and happiness. He had only landed in Boston three days before, but the time had been taken up by visits to his uncle in Brooklyne and to his sisters in Cambridge.

His story was soon told. He had gone out as his uncle's junior partner to Cuba to take the management of sugar, coffee, and tobacco plantations that Milner and Co. owned in the island; had resided alternately in the hot plains near Matanzas in the winter, and on the high mountains above Santiago in the summer; had escaped the yellow fever in the cities and the brigands in the country; had nearly doubled the value of the Milner property, and had now come home for a few months, expecting to have to go back again to Havannah, "but no longer alone."

"Ha, so! And who is the fortunate one to go with you? Do I know her?" I asked.

"Of course you do. She has been your pupil these two last winters. It is Minnie Ramsay, the youngest daughter of Mrs. Ramsay, of Roxbury. We were already engaged six months before I left for Havannah, and she has waited for me all this time. She was only nineteen her last birthday. She wrote to me

weekly, and seldom failed to mention you. Quite in love with her Italian master, I really believe."

"Just so!" I said. "Shake hands again. 'Happy, happy, happy pair! None but the brave! None but the brave!'"

"Thank you, old fellow. But now," he added, a slight cloud of apparent pain darkening his brow, "what is this I hear about you? You are going to leave us!"

"Not before the end of the month," said I, "I hope to be at your wedding before that."

"No; that auspicious event will not come off till midsummer. But—about you? Where can you hope to be better than here? Why will you go farther—"

"And fare worse?" said I, completing the sentence. "Simply because I must minister to a mind diseased. I want a change of air."

He shook his head with deep concern.

"This is sheer madness. 'Rolling stones gather no moss.'"

"What moss am I gathering here? I am not a junior partner of Milner and Co.'s," I said.

"Bah! What is money?" he replied. "Mere dross! Do you think I have been toiling and moiling for that? Wealth was for me, not an end, but a means.

The end was—Minnie. I could be equally happy with her if I were twice as poor as you may be. By-the-way! Well acquainted as you are with your pupil, you must be introduced to my betrothed—come along! My gig is at the door. An hour's drive will do you good. Come! I'll take you to Roxbury."

There was no denying him. There was nothing changed in my friend's disposition. Always the same hearty, cheerful, nervous impetuosity. He barely gave me time to take up my hat and stick. We drove to Roxbury at a racing pace; lunched with the lovely Minnie, her mother, and sisters; and on our way back to town, as I gave him joy of his choice, and told him how I envied him, he looked me full in the face as if a sudden thought had struck him.

"To be sure," he said; "that is what you wanted, though you were perhaps, not aware of it. You know, 'It is not good that the man should be alone.' God provides for every Adam his Eve. I wish I had never left you these two or three years. There is only one Minnie in the world, of course; but there is plenty of fish of the same species in this Boston pond of ours. Why should not one of our Yankee girls——?"

"Thank you, my friend," I interrupted. "A wife is an expensive luxury. More so than horse and chaise."

"That is only one of your Old World notions," he said. "We like every man to marry in these new countries—the earlier the better. Everybody is ready to help a married man. Bachelors go to the wall. But here we are at your hotel.—By-bye ! See you to-morrow, I hope. By-the-way, do you mean to see my sisters before you go ? They told me, the last they heard of you, was that you would soon be off. Sorry I cannot drive you to Cambridge this very moment. But mind—they will never forgive you if you leave without bidding them good-bye."

With this he gave his horse a cut with the whip and went round the corner towards Washington Street. I looked after him and soliloquised.

"How true it is that we are the slaves of circumstances ! Had that good fellow never gone to Cuba, I might, perhaps, not now be going to England. What a treasure a friend is ! And, especially, a female friend ! And what a darling of a Minnie he is to have for a companion ! Ha ! But 'I knows a nicerer,' as the Fat Boy in Pickwick says. And I should know where to look for her, if I were not wedded for life to that hideous old hag—Poverty."

These thoughts haunted me for all that day. On the morrow I set out for Cambridge ; I went to Professors' Row, and asked to see Mrs. Percy.

"She is out; gone to Roxbury with the professor;" I was told. "But walk in, you will find Miss Milner in the drawing-room."

There she was, sitting alone, writing at her Davenport.

My mind went back to the merry time when I used to sit near that desk for hours, evening after evening, preparing letters for our post-office at the Fancy Fair—I called her Harriett then. How lovely she was! How lively! The darling kitten! She was two years older now; just out of her teens. She had gained some of the softness and roundness, which began to be somewhat exuberant in her sister Sarah. Seated at her desk, in her neat white morning attire, she looked as dainty a Hebe as ever smiled from a Greek artist's canvas.

"Sorry Mrs. Percy is out," she said, half-rising as she gave me her hand, "I am here alone in charge of the house. They will be sorry to miss you—so sorry you are going!"

"Are they?"

"Indeed they are: everybody is: so sudden! And you will be off so soon!"

"Not before the end of the month," I said.

"Have you seen Charles? What does he say about it?"

"He advises me to stay here and—get married."

She looked up and smiled. "Not a bad advice, that," she said.

"How can a man marry without e'er a wife?" said I.

"Perchance he has got one ready for you: More probably you have one of your own in your mind's eye," she said slyly.

"Perhaps so; but not any that I can flatter myself would have me—you know I am in love with the whole of womankind. It seems hard that out of so many millions I should not have one of my own."

This was said somewhat passionately; she moved in her chair, uneasily. "Perhaps you will find one in England. Perhaps you know of some one there, ready, waiting for you. I dare say, that is the reason you leave us. Our Yankee girls are not good enough for you."

"It is I am not good enough for them. Would I were good enough for—you!" I exclaimed with rising warmth.

She stood up in some alarm, and moved a step from her chair; but I seized her hand, and brought her back, not without a little effort.

"Listen to me, Miss Milner—Harriett! Listen to me! There is nothing to frighten you. It was despair at my loneliness; it was longing for a being whom I could call my own, that was driving me, I knew not, I cared not whither. And it was your brother who reminded me yesterday that 'it was not good for man to be alone.' I have long been under some vague presentiment that I was to die young, but years pass, and the end is not; and the dreariness of this lonely life crushes me. Die sooner, die later, I can no longer live unloved. The sight of Charles and Minnie yesterday, of those two betrothed, so all in all to each other, made me frantic. Why so much happiness in this world, and so little for me? Your brother said truly: 'To every Adam God provides his Eve.' Be mine, Harriett! I love you—have always loved you. God has made you for me."

Her hand trembled in mine. The tide of her blood ebbed from her face. "Faint heart never won fair lady," I thought. I clasped her round her waist, seized her hand with both my hands, and let my lips rest for a few seconds on her lips.

She turned crimson, then livid. A frown of such rage as I never thought could harbour in that gentle heart was on her brow. She pushed me back with

what seemed a superhuman strength, disengaged herself, and rushed from the room.

A few minutes elapsed ere I had cooled down enough to perceive the enormity of the blunder I had committed. "Only lay your finger upon them, and you will find them softer than butter," my friend Paggi had said, and I was still Italian enough to believe that a man could win nothing from a woman without a little pressure. The theory may be correct enough with the *right* man, but with me it had failed in practice egregiously.

I sat down and waited. I hardly know how long I waited, but at the end of a long spell of it the maid who had let me in came in, all abashed and perplexed, and looked at me with all her eyes, as she would have looked at a dog, to see if he would bite. At last she curtseyed, and said :

"Miss Milner's compliments, sir, and she will not come down again till you are gone."

I had been mad, no doubt. Professor Percy and his family lived in Cambridge in a quiet way, and I did not know whether or not they could afford any better; but James K. Milner was a merchant prince. He had a lordly establishment out of town at Brooklyne, and the whole family were proud of their old English descent,

and of their undoubted though distant connection with the Milners of Derbyshire. How could I ever have hoped to be the "right man" with the only unmarried daughter of the house? I, a penniless stranger—a teacher of languages! Such considerations have weight everywhere; nowhere more so, perhaps, than in what is called a democracy. There was nothing in my position that could satisfy the young lady's ambition; nothing in my person that could charm her eyes or appeal to her fancy.¹

I had made an ass of myself, that is clear. There are blunders a man falls into and never forgets, for which he never forgives himself; about which he feels more shame, more anguish—more remorse—than we are taught should be felt for a crime. Of such an offence I had been guilty on my arrival in Boston; of such another I was guilty now—now, on my departure. For in Boston I felt I could not abide another day. On my return to my hotel I called for my bill, settled it, packed up my things, and in the evening took the train for New York.

Thus ended my American experiences. The few remaining days of April I spent in New York, waiting for the mail-packet that was to sail on May 1st. In

my anxiety to run away from myself, I eagerly sought the company of my Italian friends, and was soon more sociable than I had been on any of my former visits. One of these friends, Castiglia, was to be my fellow-passenger on board the *St. James*. He was one of the Spielberg martyrs, and had been for several years the guest of the Sedgewicks, of Springfield, Massachusetts. But his health was broken ; and he was now bent on seeing what power the air of his native climate could have to restore it. The whole family of the Sedgewicks were to go with him. Mr. Theodore Sedgewick, the head of it, with his wife and two daughters, Kate and Lizzie, and his niece, Catherine Sedgewick, the authoress of "Redwood," "Hope Leslie," etc., then ranking high among the American contributions to English literature. They were staying at the same hotel where I was, and the house was crowded with all New York and New England, coming day after day to wish them joy of their European tour. Among our fellow-passengers were also three New York artists, on their way to Rome—Verbryck, Gray, and Huntington—well educated, gentlemanly men, and pleasant companions, young men of good promise, who achieved success, and rose to renown in various ways. All these good people were going "home"; for such was England

still in those days to many Americans, especially to such as the Sedgewicks, who longed to see the ancestral mansion from which their great-great-grandfathers had come, and in which their cousins, many degrees removed, still lived. Among these Victoria, then not many months on the throne, was still loyally spoken of as "The Queen," as if the Union Jack still waved on the Capitol, and the President at Washington were only a Lord Lieutenant.

On the 1st of May, 1839, we were on board. The New York sky, bright and keen, blazed above us, not deep blue, like that of Italy, but light-gray, like polished steel. Such a crowd on board! Such a profusion of flowers! Such hearty cheers! Mrs. Butler (Fanny Kemble) stood on the pier to the last, her drapery flapping in the breeze, her hair out of curl, her arms high up in the air, waving a last farewell to her Springfield friends!

We were thirty-two days on board the *St. James*. What a contrast from my dreary voyage on the *Independence* of little less than three years before! The *St. James* had to sail with hardly any wind, and what little there was, was ahead. But we glided on calmly as on a floating palace, and enjoyed our month's sail, as if there had been no life before, and there could

be none after the voyage. We had dancing and singing, playing charades, and even editing a newspaper, *The Northern Lights*. We were all friends on board, and there were not too many of us.

On the 2nd of June we landed at Portsmouth, and lunched on English mutton-chops and English stout. The same evening many of us put up at the "Tavistock," in Covent Garden—the favourite hostelry for Americans before the "Langham" was even dreamt of.

END OF VOL. I.

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